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# MEMOIRS

OF THE

# QUEENS OF SPAIN,

FROM THE

PERIOD OF THE CONQUEST OF THE GOTHS TO THE ACCESSION OF HER PRESENT MAJESTY ISABELLA II., WITH THE REMARKABLE EVENTS THAT OCCURRED DURING THEIR RESPECTIVE REIGNS, AND ANECDOTES OF THEIR SEVERAL COURTS.


ANITA GEORGE.

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES,

BY

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AUTHOR OF "MEMOIRS OF FRANCIS THE FIRST," "LOUIS THE FOURTEENTH AND THE COURT OF FRANCE," &c.


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TO

# WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT, ESQ.

To no one can a Work on Spain be inscribed with greater propriety than to the Author of the "History of Ferdinand and Isabella;" and though with regret that it is not more worthy his acceptance, the Authoress avails herself of his permission, to offer him this testimony of admiration for his talents, and gratitude for his many kindnesses.

JUNE, 1850.

# PREFACE.

EMINENT writers have given us Lives, Memoirs, and Histories of the sovereigns of France and England; but, without seeking to detract from the merit of works I do not pretend to equal, far less to excel, I will venture to remind the critical reader that theirs is a far easier task than mine. Few are aware of the labour, patience, and perseverance requisite to write history. To collect all the materials necessary for the undertaking, to select with discrimination and care from the heterogeneous mass, to unite the component but disjointed parts into one unbroken narrative, and finally, to present the result in a pleasing form to the reader, is a task far more arduous than they imagine, who view it in the light of a mere compilation. If these remarks apply to history in general, they certainly do so more especially to the annals of the sovereigns of Spain. England, from the reign of Athelstane, the grandson of Alfred, in 927, has acknowledged but one sovereign; and, from the close of the ninth century, we find no division of the French dominions into separate kingdoms; while, in Spain, it was not until the year 1515,

that the Spanish dominions became united under one ruler, having, for eight hundred years previous to that period, been divided into a number of petty kingdoms, governed by independent Princes, whose frequent wars, intermarriages, usurpation of their several dominions, and, above all, similitude of names, render the compilation of their annals a work of patience and labour.

While giving such details of the lives of the female sovereigns as the records of their times afford, I have endeavoured to maintain unbroken the connecting links between each reign, sketching the history of Spain from the time of the invasion of the Goths down to the present day. Of the earlier portion of that period, we possess but meagre, contradictory, and unsatisfactory records, and those disfigured by the exaggerations and fables of a superstitious age. Of many of the Queens, little save the name remains to rescue their memory from the sea of oblivion. Of others, again, we find even the existence disputed. But, as we approach the fourteenth century, the materials of the historian become gradually more copious, and the chronicles abound with well authenticated traits of the generosity, the romantic valour, the devoted loyalty for which the sons of chivalric Iberia have ever been so eminently distinguished.

I have not entered into a detailed account of sieges, battles, and treaties, which would have proved neither instructive nor entertaining, but have omitted none of the remarkable events that were connected with the subject, though sparing those unimportant facts that would have lengthened without adding to the utility of the work. I have given facts as I have found them, allowing the reader to put his own constructions upon each, without attempting to bias his judgment by the intrusion of my

own interpretations, conjectures, and comments. No character is so black, none so fair, but that the historian, by a judicious management of light and shade, may whiten the one and blacken the other. Whatever may be the errors with which I can be charged, however, I do not think that I have incurred the reproach of partiality. I have drawn my royal personages with their good and evil traits, without either extenuation or exaggeration.

The present volume, though forming the first of a series, may be considered as a complete work of itself, since it embraces all the sovereigns of Aragon and Castile down to the period when those two kingdoms were united by the marriage of their respective Princes, Isabel and Ferdinand.

I have not thought it necessary to quote in notes each and every author whom I have consulted, but will refer the curious reader to the following list of the writers from whose pages I have chiefly drawn my materials :

Mariana, Historia de España; Garibay, Compendio Historical; Zurita, Annales de Aragon; Abarca, Reyes de Aragon; Florez, Reinas Catolicas; Cronica General; Cronica de Alfonso Onceno; Ayala, Cronica de Don Pedro, de Enrique II., de Juan I., y de Enrique III.; Guzman, Cronica de Juan II.; Castillo, Cronica de Enrique IV.; Conde de la Roca, Don Pedro Defendido; Quintaña, Vidas de Espanoles celebres; Gandara, Apuntes sobre el bien y el mal de España; Clemencia, Memorias de la Real Academica; Pulgar, Reyes Catolicas.

I have consulted every work that could be of service to me and have rejected no authority worthy of credit. For many of these references I have been indebted to the courtesy of Mr. William H. Prescott and Mr. George

Ticknor of Boston, who kindly allowed me the use of their valuable and extensive libraries, and to whom I take this opportunity of tendering my acknowledgments. My warmest thanks are also due to my friend Mr. J. T. Headley, whose efficient kindness in procuring for me both materials and encouragement amid the difficulties which such an undertaking presented, has greatly assisted me in its accomplishment.

# INTRODUCTION.

Of all the barbarous nations which, issuing from the sterile and densely-peopled north overran the more fertile regions of the south, the Goths alone succeeded in effecting a lasting settlement in Spain. After proving, under Alaric, the scourge and terror of Italy, this warlike people under Atantfus, brother-in-law of that chieftain, possessed themselves in 415 of the country lying between the Pyrenean mountains, choosing Narbonne as their capital. In the following year they passed over into Spain, from whence having driven forth and subdued the Vandals, Alans, Suevians, and Stiligians, they finally expelled the Romans, establishing a sovereignty that lasted upwards of three hundred years, and ended with the defeat and death in 714 of Roderic, the last of the Gothic Kings.

Although constantly distracted by internal divisions, the Goths, from the time of their first settlement in Spain, rapidly enlarged their possessions, and in the year 467 were possessed of Betica and Catalonia. The Suevians under Remismondas were masters of Galicia and part of Lusitania, and the remainder of Spain still obeyed the

sway of the Romans. Euricus, then King of the Goths, having made peace with Leo, Emperor of the East, after overrunning all Spain to its farthest extremity and subduing Lusitania, sent part of his forces to take possession of Pamplona and Saragossa, while he himself, with the remainder, marched towards Hispana Citerior; the famous city of Tarragona holding out against a long siege, he levelled it to the ground. This was the last of the Roman empire in Spain, after it had lasted nearly seven hundred years; and all the country, with the exception of Galicia, still held by the Suevians, fell under the dominion of the Goths. Not content with his success in Spain, Euricus, taking advantage of the anarchy and confusion into which the Roman provinces had fallen, passed over to France, and having united his forces with those of the Ostrogoths under Vinde, extended his empire over a considerable portion of that country. His successors, however, were unable to keep these conquests. The Goths being Arrians, and the Franks under their King Clovis, having embraced the Catholic creed, this difference in religion was, during the reign of Alaricus, the son of Euricus, the occasion of long and bloody wars between the two nations. The Franks proving repeatedly victorious, the Goths lost nearly all their possessions in France, Alaricus himself being slain in a battle fought in Poictiers in the year 508. Alaricus was the first King of the Goths who made use of written laws, these laws having been added to try the succeeding sovereigns, from the code known as the Forum Judicum, or Fuerro Jazzo.

From the reign of the first King of the Goths to that of the last, during a period of three centuries, thirty-three sovereigns sat on the Spanish throne, but during these three centuries the Goths woefully degenerated from their

original energy and indomitable valour. Though frequently torn by civil wars, the nation was not for a long space of time called to contend with foreign foes. The ancient ferocity of the worshippers of Odin had become gradually tamed by the spirit of Christianity, and the strength of the descendants of the sons of the north enervated by the genial climate and luxurious soil of this Garden of Eden. Weakened by a famine and divided by factions, Spain presented an easy prey to the Saracens, who invaded it in 714. But the ancient spirit of the Goths, though dormant, was not extinguished, and two years after the first entrance of the Moors, the former commenced that long series of struggles for the redemption of their country from the yoke of the Infidels, which, protracted for centuries, ended with the final expulsion of the latter in 1422.

These incessant wars with a nation skilled in the science of arms, restored their ancient energy to the Spaniards, while they also acquired from their learned as well as chivalrous foes, the polite arts of refined civilization. Though divided into several kingdoms, and almost constantly at war, the strength the Spaniards could muster is almost incredible, and contrasts strangely with their resources at the present day. The Castiles alone could easily furnish forty thousand horse, and until the reign of Juan II., no Andalusians fought in the armies of their sovereigns. Alfonso VIII., King of the two Castiles, alone gained the famous victory of Las Navas at the head of 40,000 Castilian horse and 130,000 infantry. He had also 60,000 baggage waggons, that required at least 140,000 draft horses. It is doubtful whether the Castiles of the present day could furnish one-third of this number of men and horses. Spain continued to increase in power and splen-

dour until the riches of the New World, destroying its energy and industry, caused that decline in her prosperity which has reduced her to a secondary rank among nations.

But the past affords too good a foundation for sanguine hopes of the future, to allow us to doubt that she will retrieve much of what she has lost. Spain contains within herself those elements of prosperity which the majority of other nations are forced to seek among their neighbours. Her fertile soil produces every necessary of life, every luxury of civilization. Her sons, whose bravery, industry, and sobriety once set examples to the world, have not degenerated from their ancient virtues, and the nation that was first to check the victorious career of the till then unconquered Corsican, cannot yet have fallen so low but that she may once more soar to her former glorious height.

# INTRODUCTION

BY

## THE EDITOR.

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THE study of History can be but imperfectly understood unless due attention is bestowed upon biography. Even in our own times, when society is so nearly reduced to a dead level, that individual peculiarities are daily less and less prominent, the lives of distinguished persons would almost form a history of the period; and, if such be the case at present, how much more strikingly must the same species of writing assist in the perfect comprehension of those earlier eras when knowledge was so restricted, and the means of communication so defective, that all individuals raised above the common rank, either by social position or intellectual greatness, acted powerfully and immediately upon the minds of those with whom they came in contact, and moulded almost at their will the views and intelligence of a nation.

The annals of the Middle Ages, as we possess them,

scarcely consist of more than the lives of the several reigning Princes; their wars, their intrigues, their domestic discords, the cabals of their Courts, and the adventures of their favourites, form the staple of those bulky tomes which are dignified with the name of History. It unfortunately happens also that these materials, offering, as they undoubtedly do, a wide sweep for investigation and analysis, are regarded almost wholly under a political aspect; and that thus, although they might have been made instrumental in disseminating much knowledge of domestic life and of national manners, the opportunity is lost, and the information so much desired and so desirable is not afforded. Of the people, their modes of life and habits of thinking, their studies and amusements—of the gradations of society, and the state of separation or of fusion, more or less complete, in which it existed—of all these, we learn little or nothing; the annalist passes them over as foreign to his purpose, while the historian, until of late years, treated them as undeserving of his notice. A distinguished writer has, nevertheless, truly said that these are, when efficiently handled, the framework of the historical picture, the setting of the gem; but it would have been still more correct to reverse the similitude, and to call the moral, social, and ever-progressing life of a people, the picture and the gem; and to treat wars, revolutions, cabals, and all the historical accessories as the framing or the setting.

That, however, which the more dignified writer neglected, as unworthy of his intellectual mission, the less fastidious biographer embalmed and immortalised, as he carried us from the council-chamber to the domestic circle, and showed us the hero at his own hearth as well as on the field. All who are aware of the different effect produced upon the mind by reading history, after having previously become personally acquainted with the characters, sympathies, and habits of those who (as Napoleon profoundly said) "make history," from those evolved without such assistance, cannot fail to attach a high value to historical biography. They will regard it as furnishing colour and consistency to the picture; by enabling us to deal, as it were, with living and breathing men, and not with mere abstractions, or still less interesting automata; and thus, even if the task be but imperfectly performed, if the information be scanty or ill-digested, if it be devoid of the graces of style, and given without tact or judgment, they will still welcome the biographer as an essential auxiliary to the complete comprehension of the period, its prejudices, its peculiarities, and its political prospects.

These suggestions naturally arise in the mind on considering a Work like that now presented to the English reader; and they are in some respects even enhanced by the nature of the subject. Of all the kingdoms of Europe, Spain, though by no means the least interesting, is

yet the least known. Even amid the travelling mania of the the present day, the number of strangers who visit this native clime of romance is singularly small; and those who do "pass on and go their way," are generally satisfied with a mere careless and casual investigation of the social state of a population, nevertheless, deeply interesting alike to the scholar, the poet, and the man of the world. Yet how rich a harvest lies ready for their gathering; what striking peculiarities present themselves on every side! The Spanish people are even at the present moment more than half Oriental in character. The Moors, who exhibited the Mahommedan type under its most favourable aspect, were as superior in Spain to their African brethren, as these were to their heathen predecessors. Cordova was undoubtedly the most highly civilized of all Moslem cities; while Granada and Seville (in some respects still more attractive) were scarcely behind it in the refinements of social life. Who that sees Cordova now, and remembers what it was in the time of Abderhaman III., can avoid lamenting that the Christians should have so little imitated the energies of those whom they expelled? But though the Moors were driven out, and the industry, commerce, and art of mediæval Spain were thrust out with them, they, nevertheless, left behind no small portion of their spirit. Nearly one-fourth of the Spanish language is Arabic, and certainly more than a similar proportion of the national mind.

Hence it is that Spain has been so much more stationary than the rest of Europe. Early raised to a degree of refinement, all but unknown elsewhere, it has stamped the nation with its own Oriental impress; and there appears to be almost as great a quietude in the majority of the people as can be found in Persia or in China. The Spaniards have also been cut off from intercourse, save of a very restricted nature, with those adjoining States which could have impelled them onward. With their immediate neighbours, the French and Portuguese, they have continually been on the worst possible terms—with the former especially; nor was this feeling at all diminished by the excesses committed by the French soldiery during the Peninsular war, when neither sex nor age escaped the blind fury of the victors, and even the religion commonly professed by the two countries was, together with its ministers, wantonly outraged; its temples desecrated, its tombs violated, its treasures carried off as spoil, and its holiest associations trampled under foot. The term *Afrancesado* was then adopted, and continues to be used to the present day, to signify all that is most anti-Spanish; while the population at large are reared in the practice of that motto, more patriotic than pious, "to hate a Frenchman as they would hate the devil."

With sentiments such as these, it was not probable that the civilization of France, however superior to that

of the Peninsula, would find favour in Spanish eyes; while the peculiarities of the Spanish character have also tended to keep the two nations decidedly apart. A French monarch might say that "thenceforth there should be no Pyrenees," and even hope to effect the national fusion which his words implied; but the failure of the experiment, in a moral point of view, was signal; the only link achieved between the two countries being a mere union of family interests, in which the national spirit on either side had no share. The traveller who crosses the Bidassoa instantly finds himself in the midst of a race as distinct from that which he has just left, as though he had journeyed many thousand miles; the mind of the people is cast in a different mould, and the more closely they are examined, the more prominently will their differences stand out. The Frenchman lives in public; it is a part of his nature to be perpetually *en évidence*, while the world of the Spaniard is his home. Until very recently, such an establishment as a *restaurant* was scarcely to be found in Madrid; and even the habit of taking refreshment in the shop of a pastry-cook was pronounced to be "very French." The domestic habits of the English are consequently highly congenial to the Iberian people, who, in favour of their home-loving tastes, almost pardon even their heresy. The popularity of our countrymen in Spain has by some been attributed to the services rendered to the nation during its struggle

against Napoleon; but no individual conversant with the country will fall into such an error. The Spaniards are not ungrateful; but their national pride was wounded, and they looked with a scarcely justifiable jealousy on the foreign intervention by which they were saved; and thus, although we earned their thanks, we certainly did not gain their cordiality by our assistance against their enemies. The good feeling which they entertain towards England is of much more ancient date; for even in the time of Philip II. their exclamation was

Paz con Inglaterra
Y con todo el mundo guerra—

"Peace with England, and war with all the world." Nor have the subsequent vicissitudes of war and politics effaced the confidence thus evinced. This is the more remarkable, since family reasons have closely linked together the powers of France and Spain; the two countries have been governed by nearly-allied branches of the same family; they have made war and peace together; and they have been most commonly allied against England. Nor have the arms of Spain ever been more signally humbled than when employed against the very power with which the national will so earnestly desired peace. There have been, however, many reasons why English influence has produced but slight effect in the Peninsula compared with what might have been expected: first, the

difference of religious creed, for in Spain, Roman Catholicism has been exclusive and triumphant; there has been no "philosophy, falsely so called," to attack Christianity through its conceptions. The people are essentially devout; and no check has been given to that devotion which Rome had induced. The infidelity of France was, therefore, looked upon with as much horror in Spain as it was in England; but the *heresy* was not the more favoured because the unbelief was detested. There was not sufficient intercourse between ourselves and the Spaniards to lead them largely to adopt our phases of civilization. What did exist tended invariably, however, to give each nation a high idea of the other; but still our insular situation, our (to them) heretical religion, our peculiarly liberal form of government, and the constant wars which family ambition caused between the two countries, rendered that steady intercourse impossible which could alone enable them to act beneficially on each other.

If from France and England we turn to Portugal, we shall see yet stronger reasons prevailing to prevent a feeling of reciprocity and regard. That country has ever been looked upon by the subjects of Spain as a mere province revolted from their own crown; and for a long series of years they have envied its successes, obstructed its progress, despised its literature, and ridiculed its language, while they have, nevertheless, never ceased to

cherish the hope of seeing it once more become subservient to their own rule. All the amiable qualities which distinguish the Portuguese character have failed to conciliate their haughty and irritated pride. The most obscure Spanish peasant affects a sovereign contempt for the most powerful Portuguese noble; and the bitter words of Byron unhappily express the feeling of the entire nation:

> "For well doth Spanish hound the distance know
> 'Twixt him and Lusian slave, the lowest of the low."

Thus, while her western neighbour had in commerce surpassed, and in navigation equalled Spain, while she had been as successful in colonization and in literature, and Lisbon was admitted to be a more important, as well as a more populous city than the Spanish capital, although less remarkable for its magnificence, still as little communication existed between Spain and Portugal as circumstances rendered possible. It is, perhaps, to this fact that the extreme partiality evinced by the Portuguese towards the French may be attributed; a partiality the more extraordinary, as the French armies during the Peninsular war committed, if possible, even greater atrocities in Portugal than in Spain; yet French fashions, French habits, and French manners have been constantly cultivated; the very language has a large admixture of French, and the pronunciation is as peculiarly French as that of the Spanish is Arabic. These

circumstances have also induced their reflex action, and have tended to keep the two Peninsular nations more decidedly apart; while it must also be remembered that even had a more extended intercourse existed, the effect produced would rather have been visible on the lesser than on the greater of the two powers; and that while Spain might have done much for Portugal, Portugal could have done comparatively little for Spain.

Thus, then, we are brought to consider Spain as a remarkably isolated country, with a home-born civilization, and almost, as it were, cut off from profitable communication with the rest of the European family; and she consequently presents to the student of human progress a problem of more than common interest, upon which the volumes now offered to the reader will be found capable of throwing a strong and pleasing light. The Spanish mind has derived its most powerful impressions, those, in fact, which make it what it is, from the East, and, mediately, through Africa. The Ommiade Caliphs raised in Andalusia a state which, at the period when it flourished, yielded to none in the known world, either in arts, arms, science, and literature; but it was a *Moslem* state; and while it sprang up almost suddenly to perfection, it wanted that element of perpetual progress, by which alone a country can expect to derive permanent benefit. Hence it is that Turkey, Persia, and other nations under Mahommedan rule, have been slow to

admit alike the civilization and the doctrines of Christianity. When the Christian powers in the Peninsula became predominant, and eventually expelled the Moors, they did not, and could not, efface the effects which that accomplished people had produced in the course of several centuries on the national mind. Spanish gravity is as proverbial as Turkish gravity; and the treatment and influence of women in Spain have been largely affected by the Moorish element in the Spanish character.

In order to obtain a correct view of this subject, it will be necessary to lay aside many common and received prejudices. Women are by no means the mere slaves in Mahommedan countries, which it has become the fashion, or rather the habit, of Christian nations to believe; nor are they imprisoned behind bolts and bars, beyond which they cannot move. On the contrary, they visit, and are visited by, their friends; they have rights and privileges of their own, of which they freely avail themselves. Polygamy is rather the exception than the rule of their social system; and if there really be such things in existence as submissive husbands, they are quite as likely to be found in Constantinople or Cairo, as in London or Paris. Then, again, the fact must not be lost sight of that female education was by no means neglected by the Spanish Moors: all the more elegant arts were sedulously cultivated; nor were their women debarred from studying the severer sciences. Their social import-

ance naturally became proportionate to their attainments. Abderhaman II., one of the most enlightened Princes of an enlightened race, consulted his mother even in his wars; nor had he ever reason to repent this deference to her judgment. The still more distinguished Abderahman III. not only made his favourite Zehra, or Zahra, the companion of his studies, but even went so far as to violate for her sake the laws of his Prophet, and to permit a Grecian sculptor to execute a statue of her in marble, which was placed in a court of the palace built in her honour, and called after her name "the Azahra," on the banks of the Guadalquiver, not far from Cordova. This infraction of the Moslem command did not fail to induce imitation; and, had the Ommiades been enabled to retain their kingdom, Christian art would, in all probability, have been extensively introduced into their dominions.

The influence of woman was felt and acknowledged; she was the object of romance and song; honoured as well as caressed, and alike treated with deference, and regarded with admiration. The Christians, on the other hand, rightly considering that, despite all the advantages enjoyed among their Moorish neighbours by the female sex, the condition of woman was yet very far from that contemplated by Christianity, not only regarded it as a most important part of their special vocation to rectify this evil, but also greatly exaggerated it in their repre-

sentations. Their chivalry took its tone as much from their erroneous as from their correct views upon this subject; and the result of the combination was an elevation of the female character, and a sense of the deference due to it, carried to an excess rarely found under other circumstances.

While this spirit was arising in Spain, the gaieties and gallantries of France, and the poetry of Italy, were infiltrating themselves, to use a strong figure, into Spanish society; and each added its quota to the gradually increasing influence of woman. Still one retarding element remained, the effect of which has not even yet entirely passed away; the Mahommedan view of the female character, however much it might be softened and modified by the civilization of the Moors, was far from being just; and when the Moors themselves were expelled, and their ideas no longer the subject of national jealousy and chivalrous opposition, those ideas, long implanted, were allowed to work their own natural results without antagonism. The women of the Peninsula were watched and guarded with the most scrupulous care; the duenna of Spanish romance assumed the office of the mutes of the Eastern harem; and the Moorish principle prevailed under a Christian name.

The solemn state and severe dignity of the Castilian Court gave little scope for that lightness, elegance, and fancy, in which female genius finds its most congenial

sphere; and thus the Memoirs of the Queens of Spain cannot be expected to display the same series of pictures, or even one similar to that afforded by a History of the Queens of France or England. The difference which strikes the traveller when he enters the country, will equally strike the student when he opens the records of its court. He sees a strange but interesting compound of old Rome and mediæval Bagdad. The sternness of the ancient rulers of the world, their grandeur of thought, and some portion of their continuity of purpose, mingled with the brilliant fancy and the wild fanaticism of the different Moslem races. Fierce and energetic passions utterly uncontrolled; religion fearfully corrupt, and which, corrupt as it was, was yet only partially believed; Jews, Mahommedans, and even Zingari, occupying high places in the State and the Church, and the spirit of a noble people gradually breaking through all these barriers, and, despite a government radically bad and venal beyond example, vindicating for itself a place in the world's esteem.

Such are the scenes amid which we are, in the present volumes, to trace the softening and harmonizing influence of female virtue and female genius. No country was ever so deeply indebted to any sovereign as Spain to the illustrious Isabella, whose namesake now fills the throne; and fervently do we hope that the similarity of name may prove a happy omen to a noble

land so long misgoverned; for past ages furnish many examples which the present may well and thankfully adopt and follow.

In this Work, instances will, as a natural consequence, be found alike of Queens great for good, and of others unhappily great only for evil; and if, indeed, History be "Philosophy teaching by example," let us hope that our own era may profit by the lessons thus afforded.

The gradual advance of refinement, and the influx of luxury, have not been without their effect upon a land into which the richest provinces of the West poured their floods of gold and silver; and it is by female taste that such materials are worked up into splendour and elegance, and made instrumental in the correction and idealization of that which would otherwise be but barbarian magnificence. The Queens of Spain have had no unimportant part to play in the great drama of the world; and the interest of the present Work will be considerably enhanced to the English reader by the fact that it is a Spanish lady who narrates the tale of their trials, their triumphs, and their sufferings.

The late change in the Spanish constitution, in virtue of which the present Sovereign fills the throne, by the abolition of the Salic law, and through which a female hand now wields what Philip II. proudly called "the greatest of earthly sceptres," has tended to render the

labours of the fair and able author of these Annals doubly attractive; nor do we entertain a doubt that the utility as well as the romantic interest of these volumes will tend so ensure for them a generous welcome at the hands of the English public.

JULIA PARDOE.

LONDON,
JUNE, 1850.

GOTHIC QUEENS . . . . FROM 415 TO 714
QUEENS OF OVIEDO AND LEON . FROM 718 TO 1037
QUEENS OF ARAGON . . . . FROM 1034 TO 1468
QUEENS OF CASTILE . . . FROM 1034 TO 1475

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# GOTHIC QUEENS

FROM

## 415 TO 714.

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## PLACIDIA.

### 415.

REIGN OF ATAULF, THE FIRST KING OF THE GOTHS IN SPAIN.

PLACIDIA, daughter of the Emperor Theodosius, by his second wife, Galla, the daughter of Valentinian and Justin, was, after the sack of Rome by the Goths under Alaric, in the year 410, married to Ataulf, that chieftain's brother-in-law.* After the death of Alaric, having succeeded him as King of the Goths, Ataulf, with the sanction of his wife's brother, the Emperor Honorius,† possessed

* The Princess had been one of the captives taken by the conquerors, and had, in the Gothic camp, been treated with all the respect due to her exalted birth, a circumstance which (after the demise of his brother and his own accession to the sovereignty) rendered it easy for the new King to induce the imbecile Honorius to bestow her upon him in marriage; and the more readily, as he pledged himself in return to act in all things under the imperial authority.—ED.

† First Emperor of the West.—ED.

himself of the country adjoining the Pyrenees and established his Court at Narbonne. This took place in the year 415, and in the following the Goths passed over into Spain. Ataulf, influenced, doubtless, by his wife, inclined to maintaining peace with the Romans; but his wishes on this point were little in unison with the turbulent and warlike disposition of his subjects, and he was shortly after murdered in Barcelona,* by a favourite of the name of Vernulf. He was succeeded by Sigeric,† who on his accession to the throne, ordered the six children of his predecessor to be put to death, and their widowed mother was forced to adorn his triumph by walking barefoot in the procession through the streets of Barcelona, which so enraged the people that they rose and slew the barbarian. They now chose Walia, a restless spirit, who commenced his reign by collecting a large fleet, with the intention of passing over into Africa; but his armament being dispersed by a storm, he was compelled to return to Spain, and enter into an agreement with Honorius, Emperor of the West, one of the conditions of which was, that Placidia, the widow of Ataulf, who had, since her husband's death, resided among the Goths, by whom she was treated with great respect, should return to the Court of the Emperor, her brother. The Goths also bound themselves to make war on the other barbarous nations settled in Spain; what they should gain in so doing to belong to the Romans, they themselves to remain content with the possessions already assigned them on the borders of France and Spain.

* Ataulf was assassinated in his palace, according to other authorities, by one of the followers of Sarus, a barbarian leader, whom he had put to death. *Vide* Callcott's "Spain," vol. i. p. 35.—Ed.

† Sigeric was the brother of Sarus.—Ed.

Placidia was married in 418 to Constantius,* whom Honorius made his partner in the empire. Constantius died at Ravenna, leaving by his wife Placidia an infant son, whom his uncle Honorius adopted and named his successor. Honorius dying in 423, Placidia governed the empire during the minority of her son Valentinian, who became Emperor of the West.

Of the wives of Sigeric, Walia and Theodorid, history makes no mention. The last-named King had a numerous progeny, who materially contributed to the extension of the power of the Goths in Spain. His six sons were Torismund, Theodoric, Enric, Frederic, Ruciner and Himeric. He had also two daughters, one of whom married Himeric, the Vandal son of Genseric. This unfortunate Princess was treated with great barbarity by her savage husband, who, on a suspicion that afterwards proved unfounded, ordered her nose to be cut off and sent back to her father. The other daughter was married to Recciaris, King of the Seuvi in Spain.

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## THEUDICODA.

### 486.

REIGN OF ALARIC.

Of the wife of Alaric, the eighth King of the Goths, little is known, save that her name was Theudicoda, that she was the daughter of Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, and the mother of Amalaric, who subsequently became King of the Goths. Alaric, who ascended the

* Constantius was a Roman General, of great reputation.—Ed.

throne in 486, was killed in a battle fought in the year 506, between the Gauls and the Franks under Clovis. The latter, by the victory, was enabled to possess himself of nearly all the dominions of the Goths in the south of France, and even of their capital, Toulouse.

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## CLOTILDA,

### (FIRST CATHOLIC QUEEN OF THE GOTHS.)

### 526.

REIGN OF AMALARIC.

THE next Queen of the Goths on record is Clotilda, the daughter of Clovis, the first King of France. This Princess, having married Amalaric, King of the Goths, brought him as her dower the city of Toulouse. Clotilda having been brought up in the tenets of the Catholic faith, and her husband being an Arian, the difference in their religious creeds soon occasioned domestic dissensions. On her way to and from church, the Queen was abused and insulted by the populace, who even carried their insolence so far as to throw dirt upon her; and the King, far from endeavouring to protect her from the insults of his subjects, not only reproached and threatened her, but even struck her repeatedly. Finding that mildness and patience were inefficient to soften his temper or appease his resentment, the ill-used Queen determined to implore the interference of her brother Childebert, and with her letter sent him a handkerchief saturated with the blood drawn from her by the blows of the barbarian. The kingdom of the Franks was then divided among the sons

of Clovis. Childebert was Lord of Paris, Clotarius of Soissons, Clodomirus of Orleans, and Theodoric of Metz, all bearing the title of Kings. Enraged at the wrongs inflicted on their sister, the brothers united their forces, and marched in haste to her relief. Amalaric being totally unprepared to meet so large a body of troops, and being as deficient in courage as he was in means, determined to fly. It was fated, however, that cowardice and cruelty such as his should not go unpunished, for blinded by avarice to the danger he incurred, though he had managed to escape from the city, (supposed to be Barcelona,) he returned to it in the hope of securing his treasures, and was slain by a soldier while endeavouring to seek shelter in a church. Some authors affirm that he was killed in a battle fought near Narbonne, but Gregory of Tours relates the manner of his death as given above, and this account is the most credited. Amalaric died in 531. Clotilda is said to have been an amiable Princess, but she was doubtless actuated by the desire of imitating her mother, who had succeeded in converting her husband and many of his subjects to the Catholic faith. The efforts of the Queen of the Goths were not, however, crowned with equal success, and after occasioning a bloody war, which did not end with the death of her husband, she died on her return to her native France.

In the fifth and last year of the reign of Amalaric, was held the second council of Toledo, over which presided Montanus, Archbishop of that city, of whom it is related, that being accused of incontinency, to prove his innocence he held a quantity of burning coals in his bosom during the performance of mass, and that although when taken out they were as hot as when first put in, yet neither his flesh nor his linen were burnt. This is supposed to have

been the origin in Spain of the *Trial by Ordeal;* which was continued in many places until abolished by Honorius III.

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Amalaric having left no issue, Theudis* was raised to the throne, the large estate brought him in dower by his wife, which was capable of furnishing two thousand fighting men, having been very influential in securing his election to the regal dignity. Of the lady herself, however, nothing farther is known. During the reign of this King, Childebert and Clotarius continued to ravage Spain for some time, and the war was scarcely ended when the country was afflicted with a plague that lasted two years, and carried off multitudes. Theudis died shortly after, in the year 548, having reigned seventeen years and five months. He was succeeded by Theudiselas, a sensual and cruel prince, who reigned but eighteen months and fifteen days, and was in turn succeeded in 549 by Agila, who, after a reign of five years and three months, was murdered like his predecessors, in 554. Of the wives of these three Kings history makes no mention.

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## GOSUINDA AND THEODOSIA.

### 555 TO 588.

REIGNS OF ATHANAGILD, LIUVA AND LEUVIGILD.

AGILA having been slain by his rebellious subject, Athanagild, the latter ascended the throne. This King

* Theudis was an Ostrogoth, who had been the tutor of Amalaric, and had governed the country with great prudence and judgment during the minority of his pupil.—ED.

having endeavoured, despite his promises to the contrary, to expel the Romans from all Spain, was embroiled in continual wars. By his wife Gosuinda, of whose birth and parentage nothing is known, he had two daughters, Galsuinde, the eldest, married to Chilperic, King of Soissons in France, and Brunchilda, to Sigebert, King of Metz in Lorraine. Both Princesses proved particularly unfortunate. Athanagild, after a turbulent reign of fifteen years and six months, died at Toledo in 567. After his death there was an interregnum of five months, at the end of which time, and in the same year, Liuva, a powerful Goth, who had until then been Viceroy of Gallia Gotica, was proclaimed King of Narbonne.

Of this King we find nothing of note recorded, save that, in the second year of his reign, he named his brother Leuvigild his partner on the throne, and left entirely to his charge the dominions possessed by the Goths in Spain, while he himself remained in France, where, it is said, he had reigned seven years, previous to his being elected King in Spain. Leuvigild, having married Theodosia, daughter of Severianus, Duke and Governor of the province of Carthagena, had by her two sons, Ermenegild and Recared. Theodosia was sister to three saints, Leander, Isidorus and Fulgens. After the death of Theodosia, Leuvigild married Gosuinda, the widow of Athanagild. This second marriage took place about the time he was called by his brother to share the throne with him. This Prince, immediately on his accession, took the most active measures against the Romans, and, by his bravery, activity and perseverance, soon gained great advantages over them, subduing the province of Andalusia, and expelling them from all Spain. While thus employed, the death of his brother Liuva, which occurred in 572, left him sole pos-

sessor of the throne. Leuvigild also attempted to expel the Suevians, who still retained possession of a large portion of Spain, but previous to setting out on this expedition he determined to secure the succession in his own family, and for this purpose associated with him on the throne his two sons by Theodosia, giving to Ermenegild Seville, or, as some authors say, Merida, and to Recared the city of Recopolis, which some suppose to have been in Celtibrua. His own Court he thenceforward held in Seville. To this King's second marriage may be attributed the civil wars that desolated Spain during his reign.

The cruelty with which Gosuinda, actuated by the spirit of religious fanaticism, persecuted her granddaughter, Ingundis, proves her to have been violent, inhuman, and implacable in her resentment. When the Princess, who was a Catholic, came from France as the bride of Prince Ermenegild, the step-son of Gosuinda, the latter treated her with great kindness, in the hope of inducing her to change her religion and submit to be baptized an Arian; but finding her persuasions were ineffectual, she resorted to harsher measures, upbraiding her in the most insulting terms. Not satisfied with reproaches, and exasperated with the resistance opposed to her wishes, the infuriated Queen scrupled not to lay violent hands on her grandchild, dragging her by the hair, and, on one occasion, pushing her into a fish-pond, from which she was with difficulty rescued. During the civil war that ensued between the King and his son, Gosuinda displayed against the latter all the animosity of a step-mother, and continually instigated the King to adopt the most violent measures. Leuvigild dying in the year 587, his son Recared remained sole possessor of his father's throne, and having been converted by his uncles, St. Leander, and

St. Fulgens, openly proclaimed himself a Catholic. Not only his own subjects, but even the Suevians followed his example. The Queen Dowager feigned to adopt the faith which had now become that of the nation, but so forced was her compliance, that she was seen to spit out the holy sacrament. She formed a conspiracy with her favourite, Bishop Uldid, against the King's life, but the plot having been discovered, the Bishop was banished. Gosuinda, though she escaped punishment, soon after died a natural death.

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## INGUNDIS.

### 571.

REIGN OF LEUVIGILD, RECARED AND ERMENEGILD.

INGUNDIS was the daughter of Sigebert, King of Lorraine, and of his Queen, Brunchilde, and was consequently the granddaughter of Athanagild and Gosuinda. Brunchilde having, on her marriage with the French King, been converted to Catholicism by the French bishops, educated her children in the tenets of that faith, and on the marriage of Ingundis with the Gothic Prince Ermenegild, it was expressly stipulated that she should be allowed to follow its observances. The firm adhesion of the Princess to her own creed subjected her to the hatred of her grandmother, Gosuinda. The cruel usage to which she was exposed had, however, no power to induce her to change, and amidst the persecutions to which she was herself a prey, she undertook the conversion of the Prince, her husband. In this she was successful; the absence of Leuvigild, at the time in Toledo, affording an excellent

opportunity, which she failed not to improve, being, moreover, assisted by St. Leander, Bishop of Seville. Whatever might be the spiritual benefits accruing to the Prince from his compliance with his wife's persuasions, his worldly prospects were completely ruined by his apostasy. The usual consequences attending religious differences soon followed, the kingdom was divided into two factions, one siding with the father, the other with the son; and that worst of all the scourges that afflict humanity, civil war, broke out and raged long and furiously through the distracted country. Ere matters came to this extremity, Leuvigild wrote to his son a letter, dictated by the warm heart of a father, endeavouring by every argument he could adduce to persuade him to give up the faith he had adopted.

After reminding him of the tenderness with which he had reared him, and called him to share the regal authority, he accused him of forsaking the creed of his ancestors from motives of interest and ambition, and upbraided him for resorting to such means, when, if dissatisfied with the favours bestowed on his brother Recared, he should have applied to his father for redress. The King concluded his letter by urging the Prince to be advised and submit in time to him, from whom he might yet expect the forgiveness of a father, but from whom, should he continue obdurate, he could hope for no mercy. This letter was productive of no good effects, the Prince answering in respectful terms, but announcing his firm determination to abide by the course he had chosen. The event of the war proved fatal to Ermenegild, who, after enduring many hardships and reverses, was, in 586, given up to his father by the inhabitants of Cordova, among whom he had taken refuge. He was banished to

Valencia. At Seville, near the gate of Cordova, is still to be seen a high, narrow, and dark tower in which it is said the Prince was confined, with manacles on his feet, and his hands tied behind him. Not content with the hardships he was thus compelled to endure, the enthusiastic fanatic voluntarily submitted to others, such as lying on hair cloth, fasting frequently, and observing the greatest austerity in his diet. He continued this mode of living, passing his time in prayer and meditation until the Easter of that year, which was celebrated on the 14th of April, when his father having sent an Arian Bishop to administer the sacrament to him, the Prince turned away with contempt. This obstinacy exasperated the King, who ordered his son to be instantly beheaded. Ermenegild was canonized by Pope Sixtus the First, and his festival is celebrated on the 14th of April. His prison was subsequently converted into a chapel, which was formerly held in great veneration.

No sooner had Ingundis, the fatal originator of all these evils, heard the news of her husband's imprisonment and subsequent death, than she took refuge in Africa, with her infant son Theodoric. At the commencement of the war, Ermenegild had confided his wife and child to the protection of the Romans. Peace was not restored by the death of the Prince and the defeat of his party; Childebert, brother of Ingundis, and Gontrand, her uncle, resolved on revenging her wrongs and the death of her husband, and a war was kindled between the Franks and Goths that lasted some time after the death of Ingundis. Authors do not agree as to the place where she died—some say it was in Africa, others in Spain neither is any mention made of what became of her son.

## BADA AND CLODOSINDA.

### 594.

REIGN OF RECARED.

RECARED having, by the death of Leuvigild in 587, become sole King of the Goths, his first care was to conclude peace with the Franks, and to this end he solicited the hand of Clodosinda, sister of Childebert. Recared was at the time a widower. Of his first wife, the Lady Bada, little is known, some authors asserting that she was of the noblest blood in Spain, and the daughter of Fontus, Count of the Patrimonii; others that she was the daughter of King Arthur of England. This lady was the mother of Liuva, who succeeded his father.

Of Clodosinda, the second wife of Recared, as little is known. Before her marriage, in 594, with the King of the Goths, she had been betrothed to Anthari, King of the Longobards; but as this King was a Pagan, the alliance of Recared, who had become a Catholic, was preferred. Recared was the father of two other sons, called Suinthila and Geila, but it is not known by what mother. This King died in 602, after a reign of fifteen years, one month, and ten days.

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Of the wives of the fifteen kings who successively ascended the throne of the Goths from the period of the death of Recared, until the accession in 711 of Don Roderick, the last of the Gothic Princes, but five are mentioned in history, which gives us their names alone.

Hilduara, the wife of Gundemar, who ascended the throne in 610, and reigned one year, ten months, and ten days.

Theodora, the wife of Suinthila, who, after reigning ten years, was deposed in 631. Theodora was the mother of one son, Rechimirus.

Riceberga, the wife of Chindasuinth, by whom she had three sons, Recesuinth, Theodofrid, and Favila, the father of Pelagius, the restorer of the Spanish monarchy. Riceberga had also one daughter, whose name is not known. Chindasuinth died 648.

Labigotona, the wife of Ervigius, who usurped the throne in 680, and died in 687.

Cixilona, the wife of Egica, by whom she became the mother of Witiza, and of Oppas, the Archbishop who subsequently leagued with Count Julian to call the Moors into Spain. Cixilona had also a daughter, who married Count Julian. Egica was elected in 687, and died in 701. During the reign of this King, a law was enacted that every Queen who survived her husband should become a nun, that she might never be exposed to insult.

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## EGILONA.

### REIGN OF RODERICK.

RODERICK, the son of Theodofrid, second son of Chindasuinth and Recilona, was chosen King by the Gothic nobles in 711, to the exclusion of the sons of Witiza, his tyrannical predecessor on the throne. Roderick was the last of the Gothic Kings, and with him ended the empire of the Goths in Spain, after it had lasted upwards of three

hundred years. Roderick is described as having been a Prince of excellent natural parts—resolute, bountiful, and of winning manners, but implacable in his resentments. The fatal cause of his ruin, and that of his kingdom, was Florinda,* or, as she is often called by ancient writers, Cava, the daughter of Count Julian, one of the most powerful of the Gothic nobles, Governor, at the time, of that part of Barbary called Mauritania Tingitana, then subject to the Goths. Count Julian had also the government of that part of Spain adjoining the Straits of Gibraltar, and was besides possessed of a large estate near Consuegra.

The King had married Egilona, whose birth, parentage, and age are unknown, but who is represented as being still young and exceedingly beautiful at the time of the King's death. It was customary for the children of the nobility to be educated at Court, the sons attending on the King's person, and the daughters being attached to the Queen's household. The rare beauty of Florinda soon attracted the notice of Roderick, who became deeply enamoured of her, and vainly sought a return of affection. The resistance opposed to his wishes only served as an incentive to the passion of the King, inflaming a temperament but too ardent by nature, and, in an unguarded moment, forgetful of consequences, he is said to have obtained by violence that which was denied to love. The enraged Florinda immediately wrote to her father, then in Africa, demanding vengeance, and to punish a private wrong the traitor Count leagued with Infidels, and betrayed into their hands both King and country. Some authors affirm that Florinda willingly became the King's mistress. Be this as it may, his

* Subsequently called *Cava*, a Moorish word, signifying *Wicked Woman.*

daughter's dishonour was the pretext of the Count's treachery. The power of the Saracens had now risen to a great height, for they had not only subdued the greater part of Asia, but had overrun all Africa from Egypt, along the banks of the Mediterranean, to the ocean. Count Julian, on his way to Africa, assembled the malcontent nobles, of whom there were many, on a mountain near Consuegra, called from that day *Calderino*, which, in Arabic, signifies Mountain of Treason; and there it was agreed to invite the Moors into Spain. Having repaired to Muza, who governed Africa as Lieutenant, to Wlit, the reigning sovereign of the Moors, he preferred to him his complaint against Roderick, and represented the ease with which the kingdom of Spain, weakened by internal divisions, might be conquered, and form the key to the rest of Europe. Muza, having consulted his master, sent over a large body of men to try the sincerity of the Conde's promises; and these having proved successful, though opposed by the troops of Roderick, commanded by his cousin Sancho, Muza dispatched a much larger force.

The battle that finally decided the fate of the Christians was fought in Andalusia, near Pentz, on the 11th of November, 714, and ended with the total defeat and rout of the King's army. The two armies being drawn up, Don* Roderick appeared, according to the

* Some authors affirm that Roderick was the first Spanish King to whom was given the title of *Don*.

The overthrow of the empire of the Goths is said to have been accelerated by the last of their sovereigns in more ways than one; and for the gratification of the lovers of the marvellous we will relate the following tradition as found in the old chronicles. 'In the city of Toledo, there was an ancient palace, that for many years had been closed; none of the predecessors of Roderick having ventured to open its gates, deterred by a prophecy, which predicted the ruin of the King who should dare to enter

customs of the Goths, attired in cloth of gold, and seated in an ivory chariot, and rode through the ranks, encouraging his soldiers. The Goths, though undisciplined and ill-armed, the majority having but slings and clubs, were in such numbers (100,000 men, at the lowest computation,) as to render the issue for some time dubious; but Oppas, the Archbishop, partner in the treason of the infamous Conde, having, as preconcerted, gone over to the Moors with a large body of troops in the heat of the fight, the remainder of the Goths, astounded at this unparalleled treachery, began to give way, and the rout soon became general.

The King, in this trying crisis, displayed in an eminent degree the qualities of a brave soldier and a wise General, relieving the points which he saw were weakest, replacing with fresh men the tired troops, encouraging those who stood their ground, and rallying the panic-struck fugitives. All hope being lost, he was at length compelled to abandon his chariot, and mounting his favourite steed Orelia, to take to flight, in order to avoid being captured by the Saracens. The ill-fated Roderick was never seen afterwards, and it was conjectured that he was drowned, while endeavouring to ford the river Guadalete, as his horse, part of his dress, and his buskins, embroidered with pearls and precious stones, were found on the banks.

it. Roderick, scorning a warning he suspected was intended to guard some hidden treasure, respecting neither bolts nor bars, forcibly entered the forbidden precincts. Nothing was found within, save a large chest, carefully locked, which being opened, contained a large painting, representing knights and soldiers in Moorish costumes, on horseback and on foot, with unfurled banners; the painting, moreover, bore a Latin inscription, purporting that when the palace should be opened, and the painting brought to light, the kingdom of Spain would become the prey of the men therein portrayed.

His body; however, was never discovered, and this circumstance gave rise to many stories and improbable surmises as to his fate. Spain had, some years previous to the invasion of the Moors, been greatly weakened by a famine and a plague; and these causes, joined to the dissensions that agitated the kingdom immediately before the accession of Roderick, no doubt largely contributed to the success of the invaders, who now poured in from Africa in multitudes, and drove the Christians into the mountain fastnesses, whither their enemies cared not to pursue them. Every city that from some fortunate circumstance continued to hold out against the Moors, chose a chief or governor, who, being amenable to no authority, and enjoying almost absolute power, soon became a petty king, and, in some cases, assumed that title; hence the origin and rise of the subsequent subdivision of Spain into small monarchies and powerful earldoms (Condados).

Of Egilona we find small mention during the reign of her husband, but her charms having, after the King's death, attracted the notice and admiration of Abdalasis, the son of Muza, who had been appointed to govern in his father's absence, she became his wife. The captive Queen was not long in achieving the conquest of the young Moorish chieftain, for we are told that when the prisoners were brought before him, he was so much struck with the exquisite beauty of Egilona, that he immediately offered her his hand, promising she should enjoy the free exercise of her own creed.* It is probable the

* "After the departure of his father, Abdalasis continued the conquest of the Peninsula. On his return from his expedition to the south, he inspected the prisoners and slaves of the Commander-in-Chief's household, and then for the first time saw the Queen Egilona or Ayela. She sat apart from the rest, weeping. He approached her, and said, 'O, fair

lady was not inconsolable for the loss of her brave but faithless lord, and had not his equally gallant successor been her country's enslaver, her prompt acceptance had been excusable. Egilona was as accomplished as she was beautiful, and her fond husband allowed himself to be entirely governed by her advice. Though her mental qualities are as highly extolled as her personal charms, she did not show herself possessed of prudence, for she advised her husband to a step which ultimately proved fatal to him. She represented to Abdalasis that, possessing as he did the power and authority of a sovereign, he should also assume the title. The vanity of the ex-Queen was wounded that her second lord should be less in name, if not inferior in authority, to the first, and she insisted that Abdalasis should place on his brows the garland of which the unfortunate Goth had been despoiled. This, however, occasioned a revolt among the Moors themselves, and the chieftain was slain in a mosque in 719. The date of the Queen's death is unknown. We have no

woman, why do you weep? Who are you?' 'Ah!' she replied, 'I have cause to weep. I was once the Queen of all the land, and all the cities of Spain. All around obeyed me; and now I am a captive and a slave;' and then she began to weep anew. 'Lady,' said the Prince, 'you are still a Queen, and mistress of everything in this palace, and of me. Command, and you will find yourself obeyed.' 'It is that which grieves me most,' said Aycla; 'I am in the power of one who is an enemy to my faith, and who mocks me with the name of Queen and mistress, when he may soon teach me that I am but a miserable slave. But know, Sir, that I will die before I will suffer any indignity unbecoming the Christian Queen of the Goths.' Abdalasis assured her anew of his respect, and offered her his hand in marriage; promising that he would have no other wife, though allowed others by his religion; and assuring her, for herself and people, of the free exercise of her religion. On these terms, Egilona consented to marry the young Arab, and their nuptials were celebrated with great splendour at Seville."—*Callcott's Spain, vol.* I. *pp.* 96-7.

authentic account of the subsequent fate of the traitors, who sacrificed their religion, their King, and their country, to their own private interests, but tradition says they were punished by the very individuals who reaped the fruits of their crimes. Count Julian is stated to have been deprived by the Moors of all his vast possessions, and condemned to perpetual imprisonment, after having seen his wife stoned to death, and one of his sons thrown headlong from a tower in Ceuta.

NOTE.—Some writers affect to treat the stories of Florinda, Bernardo del Carpio, the Cid Campeador and others, with utter contempt, as mere fables sanctified by time, but totally unworthy of belief. If we refuse to give credence to tradition, we reject almost the only materials for the early history not only of Spain but of many other nations. Besides, these traditions have as many authorities to support as to refute them. An excellent modern historian says, that: "No one who studies history ought to despise tradition, for we shall find that tradition is generally founded on fact, even when defective or regardless of chronology."

# QUEENS OF OVIEDO AND LEON

FROM

## 718 TO 1037.

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## GANDIOSA.

### 718.

REIGN OF DON PELAYO.

PELAYO, the renowned hero of many an old ballad, the restorer of the Spanish monarchy, a Prince endowed with all the qualities necessary in a chief and a ruler in those difficult and dangerous times, was of the blood royal of the Goths, the son of Favila, the third son of of Chindasuinth, and consequently a cousin of King Roderick. After the fatal battle that left Spain a prey to the Saracen, and in which he is said to have fought, Pelayo retired to his own estate, situated in the most remote part of Biscay, where it is probable he might have passed his life in retirement, had not an event of a nearly similar nature to that which had occasioned the ruin of the Christians, occurred to draw him from his inglorious obscurity, and enabled him to win the undying laurels that for centuries have crowned his name. Although the Moors had overrun nearly the whole of Spain, and settled themselves in its fertile plains, the Christians still held out in some parts of Navarre, Biscay, Galicia, and As-

turias, the almost inaccessible nature of the country in which they had taken refuge favouring them as much as the carelessness of the Moors, who, satisfied with the rich possessions they enjoyed, allowed their vanquished foes the undisputed occupation of the almost barren mountain wilds. The Christians, in their rocky retreats, had the free exercise of their religion, and maintained their own churches and monasteries as before. Besides these Christians, there were many towns which had freely submitted to the invader, on condition that they should be allowed to retain their own creed, laws, and customs, and also their possessions, paying to the Moors a stipulated tax or tribute.

Two years after the conquest of Spain, the Saracens, having resolved to dispossess the Goths of their dominions in France, passed the Pyrenees, and broke into that country with a large army. The moment seemed propitious for the Christians to rally and endeavour to recover their lost liberty. A chieftain alone was wanting, and none seemed better fitted to fill this post than Pelayo. The enterprise, however, was pregnant with such difficulty and danger, and the consequences, in case of failure, would have been so disastrous, that the weak and disheartened Spaniards might never have made the attempt, had not an unforeseen circumstance roused their energies and nerved them to action. The beauty of a woman again proved the firebrand to kindle the torch of war, and a sister of Pelayo was the fatal cause of the downfall of the Saracens, as Florinda had been that of the Goths. Munuza, who, although a Christian, was Governor of Gijon for the Moors, became deeply enamoured of this lady, then in the prime of her age, and celebrated for her extraordinary beauty. Aware that

Pelayo would never sanction his sister's marriage with an individual whom the high-born Goth considered a renegade far beneath him in every respect, the wily Moor contrived to send him to treat of important affairs in Africa, and availed himself of his absence to seduce the frail fair one. Pelayo, on his return, being made aware of the dishonour that had fallen on his family, dissembled his desire for revenge until an opportunity occurred of recovering his sister, with whom he fled into the neighbouring mountains of Asturias. Munuza, foreseeing the consequences that were likely to ensue, from the resentment of a man possessed of so much influence, advised Tarif of what had occurred, and that chief instantly dispatched a body of troops from Cordova in pursuit of the fugitives. The Moorish cavaliers would infallibly have captured the unprotected travellers, had not Pelayo, setting spurs to his horse, compelled him to ford the river Pionia, at the time much swollen and exceedingly rapid, and thus effected his escape, his baffled pursuers not daring to incur so imminent a danger.*

* This episode of the sister of Pelayo, for which no authority is given, appears in striking contrast with the anecdote cited by Lady Callcott, as regards Munuza; and in fairness to both parties, we consequently hold ourselves bound to quote it.

"The only man who murmured at the elevation of Abderaman was Ottoman Ben Abi Neza, called in the Christian chronicles Munuza. This man was brave and hardy, and had assembled a small body of Arabs, like himself, with whom he lived in a sort of independence among the mountains on the frontiers of France. In one of his inroads into that country, he had taken prisoner a daughter of Eudes, Duke of Aquitaine; and becoming desperately enamoured of her, married her, and purchased the consent of her father by engaging not to invade his dominions, and to assist him against all enemies. He consequently rebelled against Abderaman, who marched from Cordova, and surprised him at a small town in the Pyrenees so unexpectedly, that he had scarcely time to escape from

Having erected his standard in the valley of Cangas, then called Canica, many flocked to join him; the majority, doubtless, rather in the hope of serving their private ends, than actuated by that of rescuing their groaning country from the debasing thraldom of the Mussulman. The Asturians, a brave, hardy, and proud people, answered the call to a man, and having assembled their chiefs, Pelayo, in an impassioned speech, exposed the griefs, the vexatious humiliations the Christians, daily and hourly, endured from their tyrannic enslavers, and the manifold reasons which concurred to induce them to seize the present favourable opportunity of throwing off the ignominious yoke of the Infidel. The enthusiasm of his hearers afforded ample proof of the eloquence of his appeal to their better feelings, for one and all swore to adhere faithfully to the religious and patriotic cause, and to lay down life rather than continue to breathe it in

it with his family at one gate, before the soldiers of the Amir entered at another. He was traced from the walls to a narrow valley, surrounded by sharp rocks, which shaded it from the sun. There, by the side of a clear fountain, stretched on the soft grass, lay the daughter of Eudes, overcome with fatigue, and Munuza, who prized her more than life, was tenderly waiting on her. His people heard the sound of the coming soldiers, and escaped; but he was surrounded and taken, as he was bearing his beloved captive to some place of concealment, and died endeavouring to defend her.

"The young Princess was respectfully conveyed to Abderaman, who sent her to the Caliph, at Damascus. It is believed that she became his wife, and was the mother of some of the Princes of the house of Omeya." —*Callcott's Spain, vol.* I. *pp.* 105-6.

There can be little doubt that both accounts are derived from the same event; and it has seemed to us essential to quote the present one, in order to enable the reader to judge for himself; and the rather, that the connection between a sister of Pelayo and the subsequent contest between the Christians and their Saracenic enemies is so perfectly unexplained in the present work, as to cause considerable obscurity.—Ed.

slavery. Pelayo having, by unanimous consent, been chosen to command, and invested with the authority and title of King, took immediate measures to conquer the kingdom of which he was as yet but the nominal sovereign. The Prince was crowned in 716 according to some, in 718 according to others, and by his bravery and perseverance soon took many places from the Moors. The inhabitants of Galicia and Biscay, a race of sturdy mountaineers which had never been wholly subdued, were invited to join in the enterprise, and the revolt spread wildly, though it was not until many centuries later that the Moors were totally expelled from Spain. Pelayo having descended into the plains, took the city of Leon in 722. Some authors affirm that he was styled King of Leon, but the majority say that Ordoño II. was the first who assumed that title, his predecessors having merely borne that of King of Oviedo. The most proper certainly seems to be that of King of Leon, as, on the taking of that city, the arms of the Gothic sovereigns were changed into argent, a lion rampant, gules, which are still those of the present day. Leon, in Spanish, signifying lion. Pelayo died in 737. Of the wife of Pelayo nothing of note is recorded, beyond her being the mother of Ormesinda and Favila, who both ascended the throne.

## FROLENA.

### 737.

#### FAVILA.

PELAYO was succeeded by his son Favila, a Prince who, far from following in the footsteps of his renowned father, was solely addicted to his pleasures, and especially to that

of the chase, which in the end proved fatal to him, as he was killed by a boar, after a reign of two years. Of his wife, Frolena, we know nothing save her name, and that she left no issue.*

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## ORMESINDA.

(FIRST QUEEN WHO REIGNED IN HER OWN RIGHT.)

### 739.

DON ALFONSO I., THE CATHOLIC.

FAVILA having left no heirs, Don Alfonso I., surnamed the Catholic, from his piety, and his wife, Ormesinda, were, in accordance with the will of Pelayo, proclaimed, in 739, sovereigns of Oviedo. The valour of this Prince having greatly contributed to the success of the Christians, Pelayo had bestowed on him the hand of his only daughter. Don Alfonso was the son of Pedro, Duke of Biscay, and a descendant of King Recared. This Prince, who was possessed in an eminent degree of the qualities of a warrior and a statesman, was particularly successful in all his enterprises, and greatly beloved by his people. The Moors being engaged in wars in France, and weakened by domestic broils, Don Alfonso was enabled greatly to enlarge the bounds of his dominions, taking from them many towns, a number of which were, however, retaken by the Infidels during the subsequent reigns. By his wife, Ormesinda, he had three sons, Froila, Bimaranus, Aurelius, and one daughter, Adosinda. By a mistress, said

* Frolena, or Froibula, bore to Favila a daughter, who was grandmother of one of the wives of Charlemagne.—ED.

to have been a slave, he left a son, Mauregatus. Don Alfonso died in 757, having reigned eighteen years. Ormesinda is said to have been buried beside her husband at Cangas, in the monastery of St. Mary, having died previous to Alfonso, but the date of her death is not recorded. Many and grave authors relate that at the time of Alfonso's death, celestial voices were heard singing in the apartment of the expiring monarch.

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## AMULINA.

### FROILA.

Froila succeeded his father, Don Alfonso. In one of his military expeditions to Galicia, he married Amulina or Momerana, the daughter of Eudo, Duke of Aquitaine,* and by this lady he had a son, Don Alfonso II., who subsequently ascended the throne, and a daughter, Doña Ximena, mother of the famous Bernardo del Carpio. Froila, who had inherited his father's valour, would have been reckoned one of Spain's best princes, had he not left an indelible stain on his memory, by the murder of his brother, Bimaranus, whom he suspected wrongfully of aspiring to the throne. In order to allay, in some measure, the odium he had incurred by this fratricide, he adopted and named as his successor, Bermudo, the son of his murdered victim; but this tardy atonement availed

* Amulina, or Nuna Menina, was the daughter of Aznar, the son and successor of the great Duke Eudes, and was made prisoner by Froila, during one of the incessant wars which he waged against that Prince. Her extreme beauty produced so powerful an impression upon his heart, that he offered to conclude a peace with Aquitaine, on condition that he should receive her hand in marriage, and the proposal was accepted by Aznar.—Ed.

him not, as he was slain at Cangas, shortly afterwards, by his other brother, Aurelius. Some say,* that Bermudo was the son of Froila himself. The date of the Queen's death is unknown.

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## ADOSINDA.

(SECOND QUEEN WHO REIGNED IN HER OWN RIGHT.)

### 774.

SILON.

AURELIUS having succeeded his brother, in order to strengthen himself on the throne, gave his sister, Adosinda, in marriage to Silon, a man in high esteem, naming her also as his successor. Aurelius, dying after a reign of six years and a half, was interred in the church of St. Martin, in the valley of Iagueza. Aurelius disgraced himself by the shameful treaty he entered into with the Moors, by which he bound himself to deliver to them every year, by way of tribute, a certain number of young maids. Aurelius was never married.

Silon, though on his accession he proved himself both brave and efficient in quelling a rebellion in Galicia, had arrived at an age that led him to prefer the ease of private life to the cares attendant on royalty, and, therefore, by the advice of his Queen, who appears to have exercised great influence over him, he named as his companion on the throne, Don Alfonso, the legitimate heir, who was a child of seven years of age at the time of the death of Don Froila, his father. Having left Alfonso

* Garibay, among others.

absolute power to make peace or war, Silon and his wife retired from the cares of government. Silon died in 783. Adosinda retired to a monastery after the death of her husband.

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## BERTA, NIMILONA.

### 783.

ALFONSO III., SURNAMED THE CHASTE, BERMUDO THE DEACON, MAUREGATUS THE BASTARD.

AFTER the death of Silon, Alfonso was left sole occupant of the throne. He did not, however, long enjoy its undisputed possession, for in the beginning of his reign he was deposed by his uncle, Mauregatus, the Bastard. The usurper, having strengthened himself by an alliance with the Moors, to whom he agreed to pay a tribute of fifty young maidens every year,* was enabled to expel the rightful sovereign, who, unable to resist, retired into Biscay, where he had many adherents. Mauregatus reigned five years and six months, dying in 788, and leaving a memory stained with almost every crime. He was succeeded by Bermudo, who had been a deacon. Authors do not agree as to the parentage of Bermudo, some saying he was the son of Bimaranus, others of Froila. Bermudo reigned two years alone, after which he recalled the exiled Prince, Don Alfonso, with whom he shared the regal dignity. Though possessed of many good qualities, Bermudo's love of ease unfitting him for those stirring times, contributed, doubtless, more than his sense of justice, to induce him to recall Don Alfonso.

* This clause in the treaty is apocryphal, as the Arab chronicles make no allusion to such a convention.—ED.

The marriage of Bermudo having been declared unlawful, he separated from his wife, Nimilona, or Ursenda, by whom he had had two sons, Ramiro and Garcia, and never married again. This Prince was very successful in his wars with the Moors, who having been refused the tribute promised and conceded by Mauregatus,* had made an irruption into Asturias. Don Bermudo died in 796.

Don Alfonso, surnamed the Chaste, from the purity of his life, and the vow of continency he had made, reigned with Bermudo four years and six months, and greatly assisted him in his engagements with the Moors. Of his Queen, Berta, nothing but the name has been transmitted to us, but of his sister the following romantic incident is related in the ancient chrônicles. This lady, Doña Ximena, having been seduced by Sancho, Count of Saldaña,† the King, who, actuated by a spirit of bigotry pardonable in that age, had bound himself by the strictest of monastic vows, and who could consequently have no charity for the frailties of others, ordered the Conde to be punished by the loss of his eyes, and perpetual imprisonment in the Castle of Luna. The unhappy Princess was shut up in a monastery, where she spent the remainder of her life. The sins of the parents were not, however,

* This tribute consisted of an annual offering of both money and merchandise, together with fifty Andalusian horses, for the use of Abdulrahman.—Ed.

† Other authorities state that Doña Ximena was privately married to Sancho Diaz, and this account is likely to be the more correct one, from its justification in the subsequent conduct of Alfonso towards his nephew. The objection of the King arose from the disparity of birth between the Gothic Princess and her bridegroom, coupled, in all probability, with disappointment that he was thus disabled from forming an useful political alliance.—Ed.

visited on their offspring, who was sent to Asturias, and there educated as though he had been the King's son. Of this youth who, in process of time, became so celebrated for his exploits, under the name of Bernardo del Carpio, the ancient romances tell the most incredible feats. Having arrived at years of discretion, Bernardo being informed of his parentage, of which he had until then been left in ignorance, demanded his father's freedom of the reigning monarch, Alfonso II. His request being met by an angry denial, Bernardo raised the standard of revolt, doing such damage, and performing actions of such daring, that the nobles of the land assembled and urged the King to comply with his request. Don Alfonso accordingly sent messengers offering to exchange the Conde for Bernardo's Castle of Carpio. This condition having been accepted, the young hero hastened to greet the sire his valour had freed. Having joined the King, they rode forward to meet the Count, who advanced on horseback, clad in armour. Bernardo is said to have exclaimed: "Oh God! is the Count of Saldaña indeed coming?" "Behold him!" replied the false and cruel King, "and now go and greet him whom you have so long desired to see." As the youth drew near, the deception of the barbarous monarch was revealed; there, indeed, mounted on his charger, was the body of the ill-fated Conde, but the spirit had fled. Bernardo, in a fit of rage and grief, seized the reins of the monarch's steed, and setting him face to face with the dead, broke into the most passionate reproaches. From that time, careless of fame, the banner of Bernardo was never again seen on the field of battle, nor is his subsequent fate mentioned in story.

The celebrated battle of Roncevalles is said to have

been fought in the reign of Alfonso the Chaste. This monarch died in 824, after a reign of forty-one years and five months from the period of his first accession, though if we deduct the five years and six months of the reign of the usurper, Mauregatus, and six years of the reign of Bermudo, we find that in reality Alfonso reigned but twenty-nine years. The date of Berta's death is unknown.

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## URRACA, OR PATERNA.

### 824.

#### DON RAMIRO I.

Don Ramiro, the son of Don Bermudo, succeeded Don Alfonso on the throne. It is probable that Bermudo was well aware of Don Alfonso's self-imposed vow, and thus, by recalling this Prince, was enabled to please the nation without injuring his own cause, or excluding his own family from the succession. Thus, this apparently magnanimous conduct was, in fact, a mere act of policy—so little will the motives of the noblest actions bear a close scrutiny.

Don Ramiro married Urraca, or, as some authors call her, Paterna. This lady became the mother of two sons, Ordoño and Garcia.* It is recorded of her, that she was exceedingly pious, economizing from her own expenses, in order to enrich the churches, more particularly that of St. James, (Santiago,) in gratitude to that saint for the

* Ramiro I. was twice married. By Paterna, who was his first wife, he became the father of Ordoño, who succeeded him; Urraca was the mother of Don Garcia.—En

assistance which he rendered to the Christians against the Moors at the battle of Clavjo, where he is said to have appeared, armed cap-à-pie, mounted on a white charger, and bearing a white banner, with a red cross embroidered in the centre. This is the origin of invoking this patron saint on the eve of battle, and of the war cry, of "Santiago y cierra España." St. James and close Spain! Doña Urraca died in 861, and was buried by the side of her husband, who had died in 831, in the church of St. Mary in Oviedo.

## DOÑA MUNIA.

831.

DON ORDONO I.

Of this lady, the wife of Don Ordoño I., who succeeded his father, very little is known. She was of high birth, and became the mother of five sons, Alfonso, Bermudo, Nuño, Odoario and Fruela. Don Ordoño having reigned ten years, during which time he was continually warring with the Moors, died in 841.

## AMELINA, OR XIMENA.

ALFONSO III. (THE GREAT).

This lady was of the blood royal of France, and though her name was Amelina, it was, after her marriage with Alfonso III., changed to the Spanish one of Ximena.*

* This lady was the cousin of the French King, and niece of Sancho, sovereign of Navarre.—Ed.

She became the mother of four sons, Garcia, Ordoño, Fruela and Gonzalo, and three daughters, whose names history has not preserved. The three first of these Princes became successively Kings of Oviedo, and the last an Archdeacon. Ximena has left a stain on her memory by the encouragement she gave her son, Don Garcia, to rebel against his father. Don Alfonso having gone to great expense in rebuilding several towns, monasteries and castles destroyed by the Infidels, and his revenues proving insufficient for such an outlay, he was compelled to raise the necessary sums by the imposition of new taxes, which caused great dissatisfaction among the people. The Queen, either blinded by maternal love, and the wish to see her son seated on the throne, or actuated by some motive of which history has kept no record, instigated Don Garcia to seize this favourable opportunity of possessing himself of the crown.

The attempt proved abortive, for the King, though wasted by age and care, still retained unimpaired the faculties of his mind; and the promptness of his measures defeated the schemes of the rebels, the chief of whom, Garcia, was confined by his father's orders, in the castle of Guazon, having been taken prisoner in Zamora. The disturbances did not, however, end here, for Don Nuño Hernandez, Earl of Castile, a powerful noble, whose daughter Don Garcia had married, took up arms in his cause. The war lasting two years, the King wearied out and disgusted, in the year 886 resigned the crown to Don Garcia, giving to Ordoño the Lordship of Galicia. This King, from the numerous victories he obtained over the Moors, was surnamed *The Great;* he is said to have been valiant, affable, meek and merciful, but he seems to have strangely forgotten the latter quality, if he ever possessed it, when he

inflicted so cruel a punishment on his rebellious brothers, Fruela, Nuño, Bermudo and Odoasio. These Princes, having conspired against Alfonso, were condemned to lose their eyes, and to live in perpetual imprisonment. Alfonso died in 887, having reigned forty-six years. Ximena survived her husband some years, but the exact date of her death is unknown.

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## NUÑA, MUNINA ELVIRA, ANGOTA, SANTIVA.

### 886.

REIGNS OF DON GARCIA AND DON ORDONO II.

Don Garcia, the eldest son of Alfonso the Great, enjoyed but three years the crown which he had so long striven to wrest from his father. He died at Zamora in 889, leaving no children by his wife, of whom all we know is that her name was Nuña, and that she was the daughter of Nuño Hernandez, Count of Castile. Garcia was succeeded by his brother, Ordoño II., whose first wife, Munina Elvira, a Galician lady of great worth, became the mother of four sons, Sancho, Alfonso, Ramiro and Garcia, and one daughter, Doña Ximena. Doña Munina Elvira died in 894, in the city of Zamora.

Doña Angota, a lady of high birth in Galicia, was the second wife of Ordoño, from whom she was, according to some authors, unjustly divorced, but the causes of the separation are left unexplained, nor is any farther mention made of her.

Doña Sancha, or Santiva, the third and last wife of Don Ordoño, was the daughter of Garci Iñiguez, sovereign of Navarre. The King survived his marriage but one year, dying in 897, and was buried in the church of St. Mary, in the city of Leon, being the first monarch interred in that city. Ordoño was also the first of the Kings of Oviedo at whose accession the ceremony of the coronation was performed; and this having taken place in the city of Leon, he is supposed, from that circumstance to have been the first to take the title of King of Leon, that of King of Oviedo falling into disuse from that period, and being finally dropped by his successors.

## URRACA XIMENEZ.

### ALFONSO IV., (THE MONK).

After the death of Ordoño, the throne was usurped by his brother Fruela, surnamed The Cruel. This Prince having lost his wife; Doña Nuña, before his accession, she can hardly be numbered among the Queens of Spain. Though Fruela left three legitimate sons, Alfonso, Ordoño, and Ramiro, and one illegitimate, Fruela, he was succeeded by the rightful heir, his nephew Alfonso, son of the preceding monarch. Fruela, having reigned little more than a year, died of leprosy in 898. Alfonso, the next sovereign of Leon, married Doña Urraca Ximeñez, eldest daughter of Don Sancho Abarea, King of Navarre, and of his Queen, Doña Teuda. Doña Urraca gave birth to one son, Don Ordoño. Alfonso, who seems to have been totally unfit to govern, rendered himself odious to the nation, and, after a reign of five years and seven months, abdicated the throne in favour of his brother,

Ramiro, and took the habit of a monk in the monastery of Sahagun, careless of the future welfare of his wife and only son. The inconstancy of his disposition soon leading him to repent of his resolution, he abandoned his retreat, and again claimed the crown. Having been worsted by Don Ramiro, he was imprisoned with his wife, and the sons of his predecessor, Fruela, who had taken part in the insurrection, in the monastery of St. Julien, near Leon. Here they were kept during the remainder of their lives, the deposed King and the Princes having been also punished with the loss of their eyes.

## TERESA.

RAMIRO II.

THIS lady, daughter of Sancho Abarca, King of Navarre, and sister to the preceding Queen, was married to Don Ramiro II., by whom she had three sons, Bermudo, Ordoño and Sancho, the two last of whom successively ascended the throne. She had also one daughter, Doña Elvira, who, at her father's instigation, took the veil in the monastery of St. Saviour, in the city of Leon.* Of a proud, vindictive temper, Doña Teresa never forgave the celebrated Fernan Gonzalez, Conde of Castile, the death of her father defeated and slain by him in battle in the year 930. During the subsequent reign of her son, Don Sancho, she used every argument to induce him to second her desire of vengeance. Sancho, unwilling to break the peace he had recently concluded with the Earl, agreed, however, that his mother should apply to her

* Which he had himself founded, and endowed with the rich spoils taken at Simaneas from the Moors.—ED.

brother, the reigning sovereign of Navarre, and in him she found a ready auxiliary. Garci-Sanchez was at the time smarting under a defeat which he had lately suffered from the Earl in a pitched battle, and was willing to adopt any plan her policy suggested. A peace having been concluded, by Teresa's advice, the Navarrese King offered the hand of his youngest sister, Sancha, to the Earl, who was then a widower. Unsuspicious of treachery, the Earl accepted the proposal, and came to Navarre to receive his bride and celebrate his nuptials; but, in lieu of the friendly reception he had anticipated, he was seized and thrown into prison. His captivity was of short duration, for the fair cause of his misfortunes, not harbouring the vindictive feelings of her kindred, and favourably impressed with the noble mien of their gallant foe, spared no effort to set him free. Having effected her object, Sancha escaped with the Earl to the frontiers, where they met near Rioja an army of his loyal subjects, who had sworn never to return without their loved chieftain. At Burgos, Fernan Gonzalez celebrated his marriage with his deliverer.*

The war now broke out with renewed acrimony, and a battle was fought in which the King of Navarre was made prisoner. His kind-hearted sister was untiring in her solicitations to her husband for her brother's release, which she finally obtained, after he had been confined thirteen months in Burgos. The fierce and restless spirit of the Dowager Queen of Leon, undismayed by the ill-success her schemes had hitherto met with, now

* The relation of these wars belongs, more properly, to the history of the reign of Sancho, but we give them now, rather than break the thread of incidents occurring during the life of Teresa, who was their chief instigator.

again laboured to compass the fall of Gonzalo, and so wrought on her son that he summoned the Conde, as one of his tributary lords to attend Cortes in 936. Though the past should have forewarned the noble Castilian of the danger of meeting his unforgiving and perfidious foes, he scorned to evince the slightest suspicion, and unhesitatingly obeyed the summons. Don Sancho came not forth, according to custom, to meet his high and powerful vassal, but awaited him within his palace, and as the noble stooped to perform the prescribed act of homage by kissing the King's hand, he was seized and imprisoned.

Great was the consternation of the Castilians when the news of this disastrous event reached them, but Doña Sancha, a lady of ready wit and dauntless spirit, far from giving vent to useless lamentations, immediately devised the means of freeing her husband, by feigning a pilgrimage in his behalf to the shrine of St. James the Apostle. As her way lay through the city of Leon, the King sallied forth to receive her with the courtesy due to her rank, and the relationship in which, as his aunt, she stood to him. He even granted her earnest request of an interview with her husband. Having spent the night with the Count, Doña Sancha prevailed on him to attempt an escape in her garments on the following morning. The plan succeeded, and Fernan Gonzalez reached in safety the borders of Castile. The King, though at first greatly incensed at having been outwitted, soon learned to appreciate the motives that had actuated his aunt's conduct, and sent her back to her husband, honourably attended. Pleased with his lady's return, the Conde forebore manifesting any open resentment of the wrongs done himself, but demanded the payment of a debt the King had contracted with him. This debt, according to some

authors, was for a hawk and a horse sold by the Earl, with the condition that, if not paid for within a certain time, the amount should be doubled each succeeding day. The King having delayed the payment, the amount due now exceeded his means, and the Conde making continued inroads on the lands of Leon, the contending parties agreed, in 937, that, as an equivalent, Castile should be released from all homage or subjection to the crown of Leon.

During the reign of King Ramiro, the Conde of Castile, Fernan Gonzalez, weakened by the war he had lately sustained against the Navarrese, and threatened by a large army of Moors that had appeared on his frontier, implored the assistance of the King of Leon, who accordingly hastened to his relief with a large force, and having joined the Conde, they gave battle, near Osma, to the Infidels, who were entirely defeated. It is probable that Don Ramiro would not so readily have consented to assist the Conde, had not the latter agreed to make Castile (which had been separated from Leon in the reign of Don Fruela) a feudatory to Leon. In the subsequent reign of Don Sancho it was, as we have already related, finally released from this dependence. Don Ramiro died in 924.

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## DOÑA URRACA AND DOÑA ELVIRA.

### 924.

DON ORDONO III. AND DON SANCHO I.

URRACA, the daughter of the famous Conde of Castile, Fernan Gonzalez, and of his first wife, Doña Urraca, was, during some temporary cessation of hostilities between the

ever-contending Castilians and Leonese, married to the Prince Ordoño, who afterwards succeeded his father Don Ramiro, on the throne of Leon, in 924. On the accession of this Prince, his uncle, Garci-Sanchez, King of Navarre, and his father-in-law, leagued to dethrone him. The attempt proving abortive, Ordoño, enraged at the unprovoked conduct of the Count, was divorced from his daughter, and married the Lady Elvira, daughter of Don Gonzalo, Conde of Asturias, and of his wife Doña Teresa. By this second wife, Don Ordoño had one son, Bermudo, who subsequently ascended the throne. Don Ordoño, a brave and prudent sovereign, was greatly beloved by his people; but the shortness of his reign prevented his doing all the good they had reason to expect from him. He died at Zamora in 929, after a reign of five years and some months.

Don Ordoño was succeeded by his brother Don Sancho, who, in the second year of his reign, was compelled to seek shelter among the Moors, the army having declared in favour of Ordoño, the son of Alfonso the Monk, who had been left an infant at the period of his father's abdication. This Prince, whose character may be conjectured by his surname of 'The Wicked,' might have sustained himself on the throne he had usurped, had his talents for governing been equal to his ambition, as he had strengthened his party by marrying Urraca, the divorced wife of the late sovereign, and thus secured the powerful alliance of Castile. He soon, however, rendered himself so odious to the nation, that on the approach of Sancho, at the head of a large body of troops, he was obliged to fly into Asturias, and thence into Castile; but his father-in-law, indignant at his cowardice, took his wife from him, and otherwise gave him so cold a reception,

that he preferred throwing himself on the protection of the Moors, among whom he died, poor and despised. Of Doña Urraca, who seems to have been particularly unfortunate in her matches, no more is said, but that she died in 965. Neither is aught else said of Elvira.

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## DOÑA TERESA.

### 929.

SANCHO THE FAT.

TERESA, the daughter of Aznar Fernandez, Conde of Monzoa, was the wife of Sancho I., by whom she had one son, Ramiro. She is said to have been a lady of extraordinary beauty and superior intellect. During the minority of her son, who was but five years of age when his father died, she governed the kingdom with great prudence. The date of her death is not recorded. Don Sancho, having been relieved of his excessive corpulence by the Moorish physicians of Abderrhaman, King of Cordova, was also assisted by that monarch with troops to recover his kingdom from the usurper, Ordoño the Wicked. Of Sancho's wars with the Earl of Castile, some account has been given in the Life of the Queen Mother, Teresa. Don Sancho died, poisoned by an apple, given to him by one of his vassals, in the year 941.

## DOÑA URRACA.

### 941.

RAMIRO III.*

DOÑA URRACA was the wife of Don Ramiro III. This lady possessed great influence over her husband, but unfortunately solely employed it to counteract the wise plans of his mother, and aunt Doña Elvira, or, as some called her, Doña Geloyra, whose prudent advice she frequently caused him to disregard. During the reign of this King, the inhabitants of Neustria, now Normandy, who lived principally by rapine, and were constantly infecting the coast of Spain, having gathered a large fleet, made an irruption on the coast of Galicia, burning villages, towns, and castles, and carrying off an enormous booty. This plague lasted two years, the youth of the King preventing any efficient measures being taken for the protection of the country. At the end of this time, Don Garci-Sanchez, Count of Castile, son of Fernan Gonzalez, assembled a force, and surprising the Normans near the sea, as they were returning laden with plunder, gave them a signal defeat, taking their captain, recovering the prisoners and booty, and destroying their ships. Ramiro having, by his ill conduct, created great discontent, the inhabitants of Galicia rebelled, and elected for their King Don Bermudo, son of Don Ordoño III., and cousin of Don Ramiro.

The war lasted two years, Bermudo finally remaining master of Galicia. Don Ramiro died in Leon in 965, and

* The wives of Ramiro II. and Ramiro III. were both called Urraca, their eldest sons were both Ordoños.

was succeeded by his cousin, Don Bermudo, the latter having reigned ten years in Galicia before his accession to the throne of Leon.

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## VELASQUITA AND ELVIRA.

### 965.

BERMUDO II., THE GOUTY.

THE first of these ladies was divorced from her husband, Don Bermudo II., though without any lawful reason, after having given birth to a daughter, Doña Cristina.

Doña Elvira, the second wife of Bermudo, brought him a son, who succeeded him as Alfonso V., and a daughter, Teresa. Bermudo reigned seventeen years, and died in 982. Although a martyr to the gout, Bermudo imitated his predecessors in warring with the Infidels, over whom, with the assistance of the Conde of Castile, he obtained signal advantages, though at one time they advanced as far as the city of Leon, and destroyed its walls to the foundations.

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## DOÑA ELVIRA.

### 982.

DON ALFONSO V.

THOUGH Alfonso, at his father's death, was but five years of age, the kingdom suffered from none of the evils that generally attend the minority of Princes, being wisely governed by Don Melindo Gonzalez, Conde of Galicia,

and his wife, Doña Mayor, who had been appointed by the will of the late King's guardians of the Prince, and entrusted with the regency. The young King, on attaining his majority, pleased with the integrity and prudence with which his tutors had discharged their important trust, married their daughter, Elvira, by whom he had a son, Bermudo, who succeeded him, and a daughter, Sancha, who in turn succeeded her brother on the throne. Alfonso was killed in the siege of Viseo, in Lusitania, in the year 1028. Elvira survived her husband many years, dying in 1052.

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## DOÑA TERESA.

### DON BERMUDO III.

Doña Teresa was the daughter of Don Sancho, Conde of Castile, who died in the same year as Alfonso V., King of Leon. Besides Teresa, who married Bermudo, the young King of Leon, the Conde of Castile left another daughter, Doña Nuña, married some time previous to her father's death to Don Sancho, King of Navarre, and a son, Don Garcia, who succeeded him in the condado. Garcia, a promising youth of thirteen, was betrothed in the year of his accession to the title, to Sancha, sister of the young King of Leon, and this double alliance, which was to have consolidated the league between the Leonese and Castilians, and united them against their common foe, the Moor, proved the cause of the young Prince's untimely death. The city of Leon was the place appointed for the celebration of the nuptials, and thither Don Garcia repaired, attended by his brother-in-law, the King of Navarre, who, to do him the greater honour, was accom-

panied by his two young sons. The retinue of men of note from Castile and Navarre was so numerous as to resemble an army, and consequently unable to advance very rapidly. This tardiness in their progress being little suited to the fiery spirit of the youthful bridegroom, impatient to see his intended bride, he pushed on, with but few attendants, leaving the King at Sahagun, to follow at his leisure.

A plan was laid for his destruction by the sons of Don Vela, a Castilian noble, who, for his turbulent conduct had been exiled during the reign of Garcia's father. Having met the young Prince at the gates of Leon, they knelt at his feet imploring his forgiveness, and were by the kind youth immediately reinstated in his favour. He then proceeded to the church of St. Saviour for the purpose of hearing mass, but, at the very door, was struck down by the traitors; Don Rodcrick, the eldest, who was the Conde's god-father, being the first to bury his poniard in his breast, and the other brothers dispatching him with their swords.*

The untimely end of Don Garcia occasioned great changes. Don Sancho, King of Navarre, whose tents were pitched at the gates of Leon, was heir, in right of his wife, Doña Nuña, to the earldom of Castile, which he forthwith erected into a kingdom. The power of this sovereign was now becoming formidable, and to appease the storm with which his inordinate ambition threatened Leon, it was agreed by Don Bermudo, with the concurrence of his nobles, that the widowed maid, his sister, should marry the second

* The murderers fled to Monzon, but were pursued, taken, and burned alive, by the King of Navarre. Garcia was the last of the Counts of Castile, which remained an independent Kingdom for two centuries, but at the end of that time was united to Leon.

son of Don Sancho, and be declared heiress to the crown of Leon. This arrangement satisfied the King of Navarre, who, at the head of his forces, was always ravaging his brother-in-law's domains, and a peace was concluded. Doña Sancha was married to Ferdinand, in 1030. It is probable that her boy-lover had not made a very lasting impression on her heart, though a Spanish historian affirms that when told of his death she fainted, and, on her recovery, ran to the spot where the body lay, and, embracing it, wasted herself in sighs and tears. Peace lasted for some time, until Don Sancho dying, and his sons being disunited, Bermudo sought to indemnify himself for the disadvantageous terms extorted from him, and was slain in a battle fought on the banks of the river Carrion in 1037. Thus all the domains of the Christian sovereigns of Spain fell into the hands of one family, Ferdinand, who was already King of Castile, becoming also King of Leon, his wife's inheritance. Bermudo left no children, Alfonso, his only son by his Queen, dying in childhood. Of Teresa no farther mention is made after her husband's death.

# QUEENS OF ARAGON.

FROM

1034 TO 1474.

## DOÑA NUÑA, OR ELVIRA MAYOR.*

(QUEEN OF NAVARRE, COUNTESS OF ARAGON, AND COUNTESS, BY INHERITANCE, OF CASTILE.)

1000.

REIGN OF DON SANCHO IV., (*Surnamed el Mayor—the Great.*)

(CONDADO OF CASTILE, FIRST ERECTED INTO A KINGDOM IN 1034, UNDER FERDINAND I.)

(CONDADO OF ARAGON, FIRST ERECTED INTO AN INDEPENDENT KINGDOM IN 1034, UNDER RAMIRO I.)

DOÑA NUÑA, also called Elvira Mayor, was the daughter of Don Sancho, Count of Castile. Having married Sancho IV., King of Navarre, she was already the mother of three sons, Garcia, Ferdinand, and Gonzalo, when the tragical death of her only brother, Garcia, the last Count of Castile, murdered by traitors in the fourteenth year of his age, and the first of his reign, left her the heiress of

* Doña Nuña does not rank among the Queens of Aragon, of which she was only the *Countess*, that province having been settled on her as a jointure by her husband; but, as the annals of her reign contain the incident that explains the separation of that province from Navarre, and its erection into an independent kingdom, they are given here.

Castile. Though this accession of power made her husband the greatest of Spain's monarchs, it proved no shield to protect his consort against domestic sorrows and the poisoned shafts of calumny, and this hapless Queen was destined to feel both as a wife and a mother the severest pangs that can torture the human heart. Don Sancho having taken possession of Castile as his wife's inheritance, and, by his son Ferdinand's marriage with the heiress of Leon, secured to his own family the whole of the Spanish dominions with the exception of the Moorish possessions, next turned his attention to the prosecution of the war with the Infidels, who, divided among themselves, presented to the ambitious Sovereign of the Christians an excellent opportunity of extending his territories at their expense.

Ere he departed on this expedition, Don Sancho earnestly commended to the Queen's care a horse by which he set great store. In those days the Spaniards considered their horses, hawks, and arms as their most valuable property. During the King's absence, Garcia, the eldest son, requested the Queen to lend him his father's favourite steed, and she was on the point of acceding to his desire, when Pedro Sese, Master of the Horse to the King, interfered, representing to her how much incensed the sovereign would be by her so doing. Her denial so much infuriated the rash youth, that he immediately wrote to his father, accusing Doña Nuña of criminal intercourse with the Master of the Horse. Surprised at the extraordinary tidings, the King hastened home; but, though the previous conduct of the Queen gave the lie to this infamous charge, on the other hand it seemed utterly improbable that a son would coin this fearful tale without some foundation. Ferdinand,

indeed, did not corroborate his brother's statement, but neither did he contradict it, and, when questioned, replied in so dubious a manner as to increase the King's perplexity. The unhappy Queen was imprisoned in the castle of Najera, and the assembled nobles decreed that, according to the customs of the age, her guilt or innocence should be decided by a duel, and that, should her champion be defeated, or should she find no knight willing to do battle in her behalf, she should perish at the stake. The chances in Doña Nuña's favour were small indeed, the high rank of her accuser deterring many, who, convinced of her innocence, would otherwise have been willing to peril their lives to vindicate her honour; and the fatal day arrived, bringing no hope of rescue to the doomed victim. In this extremity, when a cruel and lingering death seemed inevitable, an unexpected champion entered the lists and accepted the slanderer's defiance. The bold knight who, compassionating the wretched mother, convinced of the falseness of the accusation, or actuated by some feeling of private animosity against the accuser, espoused the cause of Nuña, was Don Ramiro, a natural son of the King by a Navarrese lady of rank. Whatever might have been the issue of the combat, it could not but prove a sad one to the monarch, but it was happily prevented by the interference of a monk, a man of great eloquence, and held in high repute for his sanctity. Horror-struck at the sight of two brothers arrayed in arms against each other, the holy man descended into the lists, and so wrought on the minds of both Garcia and Ferdinand, that, casting themselves at the King's feet, they proclaimed the Queen's innocence, and confessed their own guilt. After the most severe reproaches, Don Sancho left the punishment

of the culprits to the Queen, giving her full authority to act towards them according to her pleasure. Overcome by the entreaties of the nobles, who interceded for their pardon, Nuña forgave her unnatural sons, but exacted from the King that he should name her gallant champion heir to the Comdado of Aragon, his noble conduct amply atoning for the stain upon his birth. Castile was bestowed on the second son of Ferdinand, and Garcia was thus deprived of the inheritance to which he was entitled from his mother, and reduced to the little kingdom of Navarre. This incident savours so strongly of romance, that we should be inclined to read it as one of the fictions handed down to us in the ancient *cancioneros*, but that it is related by sundry grave and ancient authors, who thus account for the division of the kingdoms; but others assert, that the King so ordered it in his will, and that Ramiro was a legitimate son by a former wife. Don Garcia, in expiation of his sin, undertook a pilgrimage to Rome. The death of Sancho occurred in 1034, on the 18th of October. The date of the Queen's death is not recorded, though it is made manifest that she survived her husband several years. To her youngest son, Gonzalo, was left the petty kingdom of Sobrarve and Rivagorza.

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## DOÑA GISBERGA, OR ERMESINDA.

### 1036.

REIGN OF DON RAMIRO.

Don Ramiro was the first sovereign who bore the title of "King of Aragon," that country having been governed for two hundred and fifty years previous to his accession

by *Condes*. In 1034, Sancho, King of Navarre, dying, his son Ramiro entered into possession of the kingdom, of which, during his father's life, he had been proclaimed the heir. The majority of the ancient Aragonian chronicles, to remove the stain of bastardy from the birth of this, their first monarch, assert that Sancho IV. was twice married, and that Ramiro was the son of his first Queen. Had this been the case, it would have seemed more natural that Ramiro should have inherited the crown of Navarre. Be it as it may, however, Ramiro proved himself worthy of the throne, by his numerous good qualities. In 1036, he married Ermesinda, the daughter of Barnard Roger, Conde of Bigorra, and of his wife, Garsenda. This Princess gave birth to three sons, Sancho, Ramirez, and Garcia, who became Bishop of Iaca; and to two daughters, Sancha, who married the Count of Toulouse; and Teresa, who married Beltran, Count of Provence. Ermesinda died on the 1st of December, 1059, and was buried in the monastery of St. John de la Peña. Some authors tell us that Ramiro was twice married, and that his first wife's name was Gisberga; others, that both names are given to the same Queen. Ramiro spent nearly all his life in wars, especially with his brother Garcia, the King of Navarre, and was killed in battle about the year 1067, leaving the throne to his son, Don Sancho Ramirez.

## DOÑA FELICIA.

### (QUEEN OF ARAGON AND NAVARRE.)

### 1063.

REIGN OF SANCHO RAMIREZ.

FELICIA, the wife of Sancho Ramirez, the second King of Navarre, was the daughter, by his wife Clemencia, of Armengaul, Count of Urgel. She gave birth to three sons, who all reigned in succession—Pedro, Alfonso, and Ramiro. Don Sancho Ramirez was an excellent and brave Prince, and engaged, during the greater part of his life, in wars with the Moors, in which he was very successful. Don Sancho Garcia, the King of Navarre, having in 1076 been murdered by his own brother, Ramon, the Navarrese offered the crown to the cousin of the murdered sovereign, and Sancho Ramirez having accepted it, Aragon and Navarre once more fell under the sway of one King, with the exception, however, of Bribrisca and Rioja, which submitted to Alfonso, the King of Castile. The latter sovereign laid claim to a better right to the kingdom of Navarre than Sancho Ramirez, as the King of Aragon was descended from an illegitimate son of Sancho the Great, while the Castilian was the legitimate son's offspring. Sancho Ramirez was killed at the siege of Huesca, in 1094, having reigned in Aragon twenty-seven years, and in Navarre eighteen, and was buried in the church of San Juan de la Peña, by the side of his Queen, who died in April, 1086.

## BERTA, OR INES.

(QUEEN OF ARAGON AND NAVARRE.)

1094.

REIGN OF DON PEDRO I.

DONA BERTA, or, as some call her, Ines, an Italian lady, was the wife of Pedro I., the third sovereign of Aragon and seventeenth of Navarre. The Queen gave birth to a son, called after his father, and a daughter, Isabel, who died unmarried on the same day as her brother, the 18th of August, in the year 1104. The King, oppressed with grief at the loss of his children, survived them but one month, leaving the throne to his brother, Alfonso the Warrior.

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## DOÑA URRACA.

(QUEEN OF ARAGON AND NAVARRE, AND IN HER OWN RIGHT OF CASTILE.)

1104.

REIGN OF DON ALFONSO, THE WARRIOR.

FOR the annals of this Queen, *vide* Queens of Castile.

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## DOÑA AGNES.

1134.

REIGN OF DON RAMIRO.

DON ALFONSO the Warrior, having no children, and his only surviving brother, Ramiro, being a monk, be-

queathed his dominions, in his will, to the Knights Templars, Hospitalers, and of the Holy Sepulchre, but no attention was paid to this extraordinary donation. The nobles of Aragon, assembling at Monzon, chose for their sovereign Ramiro, though he had been forty years leading a life of religious seclusion, first as Abbot of Sahagun, then successively as Bishop of Burgos and Pamplona, and lastly of Roda and Barbastro. The Navarrese, on their side, never having been contented to submit to the sway of the monarchs of Aragon, seized this opportunity to separate, and proclaimed as their King, Don Garcia, a lineal descendant of the royal family of Navarre, and grandson of the murdered King, Don Sancho.

Pope Innocent II. having granted a dispensation to the monk-king of Aragon, he married, in 1136, Agnes, sister or daughter of William, Count of Poictiers and Guienne. This lady gave birth to a daughter, Petronilla, who was betrothed, in her infancy, to Raymond, Count of Barcelona, to whom Ramiro, whose age and infirmities incapacitated him for the cares of government, delegated all his authority. From the birth of Petronilla, no farther mention is made of the Queen, who, it would appear, lived but a short time after her marriage, Ramiro being represented as a widower when he retired to a monastic life, in 1137, after having reigned three years. It is probable that Agnes did not survive the birth of her daughter.

# PETRONILLA.

## (QUEEN IN HER OWN RIGHT OF ARAGON.)

### 1154.

REIGN OF RAYMOND, COUNT OF BARCELONA AND PRINCE OF ARAGON.

### 1137.

Dona Petronilla, daughter of Ramiro the Monk, was, as already stated, betrothed in her infancy to Raymond, Count of Barcelona. The conditions of this marriage, which united Catalonia to Aragon, in 1137, were, that the Count himself should never bear the title of "King," but merely that of "Prince" of Aragon, and that the offspring of the Queen should succeed to the throne with that title; that the arms of Catalonia should be united with those of Aragon, but that the standard-bearer should always be an Aragonian; and that the Aragonians should invoke the name of St. George, as that of their patron. Petronilla gave birth, in 1150, to her eldest son, Raymond, who succeeded to the throne under the name of Alfonso, and subsequently to Pedro, who inherited Sardinia, Carcassone and Narbonne. She had also two daughters, Aldonza or Dulcis, who, in 1181, married Sancho, Prince of Portugal, and another, whose name is not recorded, though she is said to have married Armengaul, Count of Urgel. The Queen being extremely ill previous to the birth of her eldest child, made a will, providing that should the infant prove a son, he should succeed to the crown, but, if a daughter, the throne should be inherited by her husband. This will, excluding

a female from inheriting the crown, was ever afterwards quoted as a precedent against the sovereigns of Aragon, when they attempted to bequeath the crown to a daughter. Though Raymond, during the lifetime of his father-in-law, was in fact, if not nominally, the King of Aragon, he strictly conformed to the conditions, and never took the title, though his wife did that of Queen, from the time of her father's death, in 1154. Raymond proved himself fully capable of discharging the duties of his important trust, governing the kingdom with prudence and moderation, and defending it with ability and valour. With ready tact, he managed to maintain a constant peace with his powerful brother-in-law, the King of Castile, Alfonso VIII., and in his wars with the Moors was extremely successful. Raymond dying in August of 1162, Petronilla reigned twelve months, during the minority of her son; but on his attaining his thirteenth year, in 1163, by the advice of the nobles she resigned the crown to him. The Queen died on the 3rd of October, 1173, in Barcelona.

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## SANCHA.

### 1174.

REIGN OF ALFONSO II.

### 1163.

REIGN OF PEDRO II.

### 1197.

DONA SANCHA, daughter of Alfonso VIII., King of Castile, and of his second wife, Rica, was in 1174 married to Alfonso II., King of Aragon. This marriage

had been projected between Raymond, Prince of Aragon, and the Emperor of Castile; but some disagreement subsequently occurring, it was broken off by the young King of Aragon after his accession, and ambassadors were sent to Emmanuel, Emperor of Constantinople, with proposals for the hand of his daughter, Maria. The offer of the King of Aragon was accepted, but the fleet of the Pisanos preventing the Princess from setting out for some months, Alfonso in the meanwhile altered his mind, and, on Maria's arrival at Montpelier, she was greeted with the news of the marriage of her intended husband with his first betrothed bride, the Infanta of Castile. William, the Lord of Montpelier, in spite of the opposition of the Greek nobles who accompanied her, married the disappointed bride; but one of the conditions of this union was, that the principality of Montpelier should be the inheritance of Maria's offspring, whether son or daughter. The issue of this union was a daughter, called after her mother Maria, who subsequently married Pedro II., son of her mother's former suitor.

Sancha gave birth to three sons; Pedro, Alfonso (who inherited the Condado of Provence), and Ferdinand, who became a monk. She had also four daughters, three of whom were married during the reign of their brother Pedro; Constance, first to Emenius, King of Hungary, and, after his death, to the Emperor Frederic, King of Sicily: Leonor and Sancha to two Counts of Toulouse, father and son; the fourth daughter, Dulce, took the veil in the monastery of Xinena. Alfonso II. dying in April, 1196, left Sancha Regent of the kingdom, and guardian of the royal children, until the eldest should attain his majority. On the accession of Pedro, in 1197, an unhappy misunderstanding taking place between him

and his mother, the latter betook herself to her dominions, the towns assigned her as a jointure by her husband, and erected her standard in opposition to that of the King. Through the mediation of the King of Castile, her nephew, with whom Sancha and her son had an interview in Hariza, in September, 1200, the difficulties were brought to a happy termination, and it was agreed that the Queen-Dowager should give up the towns of Hariza, Embite, and Epila, which, from their situation on the frontiers of Castile, were of the utmost importance to the King of Aragon, and had been, in some measure, the occasion of the ill-feeling between Pedro and his mother, as the latter could, through them, command free egress to Castile, and disturb, at her pleasure, the peace of the two kingdoms. Sancha received, as a compensation, the town of Azron, and the castle and town of Tortosa, retaining the other castles and towns in Catalonia assigned her by her husband. Though this temporary reconciliation lasted but a short time, it was renewed, through the interference of the nobles, in 1201.

The next public act of Queen Sancha was in 1207, when she negotiated with the Pope to procure the marriage of her daughter, Constance, widow of the King of Hungary, with Frederic, King of Sicily, son of the Emperor Henry. Constance, through the assistance of Leopold, Duke of Austria, had, after the death of her husband, left Hungary, and was at that time residing with her mother in Aragon. Sancha dispatched Colom, her own secretary, to treat with the Pope, offering, in case he would facilitate the marriage, to send two hundred mounted gentlemen to the assistance of Sicily, and to bring her daughter, accompanied by four hundred more, on condition that the expenses which she incurred should be refunded to her in the event of the

failure of the marriage. The Pontiff having acceded to the proposal, the alliance agreed upon by the Ambassadors of Rome and Sancha, who, accompanied by her son, the King of Aragon, received them in Saragossa in 1208. Constance was accompanied to Sicily by her brother, Alfonso, the Count of Provence, and a brilliant retinue of Aragonian and Catalonian nobles and gentlemen. They landed safely in Palermo in February, 1209, but the nuptial festivals were interrupted and saddened by the death of the Count of Provence, and numbers of the Spanish cavaliers, to whom the malaria proved fatal.

Sancha died in November, 1208, in the monastery of Xinena, to which she had retired.

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## MARIA DE MONTPELIER.

### 1304.

REIGN OF PEDRO II., (THE CATHOLIC).

### 1296.

MARIA, daughter of the Grecian Princess, Mary of Constantinople, and of William, Lord of Montpelier, married in 1204, two years after the death of her father, Pedro II., King of Aragon.* Though this alliance united

* Pope Innocent III. had been anxious to negotiate a marriage between the Aragonese sovereign and Mary, daughter of Isabel, Queen of Jerusalem; and the young King himself strongly inclined to the alliance; but as he had aroused the jealousy of his subjects, by permitting himself to be anointed by the Pontiff, and doing homage for his kingdom, thus admitting the spiritual supremacy of the Holy See, the States of Aragon, anxious to maintain the independence of their country, resolutely opposed any further concession on his part; and in order to regain their confi-

to the crown of Aragon the lordship of Montpelier, the disparity which existed between the age of the young King and that of his consort, coupled with her want of beauty, rendered it a most unhappy one. Pedro, little valuing the mental qualities of Maria, who was one of the most amiable Princesses of her time, sought in others those personal charms of which she was unfortunately wholly destitute; but, in order to give colour to the neglect proceeding from his own inconstant nature, he alleged the Queen's former marriage as a motive for desiring a divorce. Maria had married during her father's life, and in obedience to his commands, the Count of Comminge; but this union was never publicly acknowledged, and was annulled after Maria had given birth to two daughters, in consequence of its being discovered that the Count had already married two other ladies, both of whom were still living. Though Pedro repaired in person to the Court of Rome, made his kingdom a feudatory to the Church, and received his crown from the hands of the Pope, who bestowed on him the surname of "the Catholic," the Pontiff refused to grant a divorce on such insufficient grounds.

In 1207, through the good offices of Don Guillen de Alcalá, a temporary reconciliation was effected between the King and Queen, and in 1208 she gave birth to her only son James, subsequently surnamed *the Conqueror*. The means taken to select a name for the young heir to the crown are too characteristic of the superstitious manners of the age not to be recorded here. Maria, desirous of selecting for her babe a patron saint from among the

dence, he conserted to unite himself with Maria, the daughter of William VIII. Count of Montpelier, and of Eudocia, daughter of the Greek Emperor, Manuel Comnenus.—Ed.

Holy Apostles, yet unwilling that her preference of one should give offence to the others, ordered that twelve wax tapers bearing each the name of one of them should be lighted and placed around the cradle. That which bore the name of the warlike patron saint of Spain having far exceeded in brilliancy and duration the other tapers, the Prince was christened Santiago, or as the Aragonese call him, Jaime (James.) The good understanding between Pedro and his Queen was of short duration; and his feeling of distaste towards her became so deadly, that neither in private nor in public would he acknowledge her son as his, but named his own brothers as his successors to the crown, and renewed his suit for a divorce. Stung by the injustice done to herself and her innocent offspring, Maria, who had hitherto lived in patient resignation in her own domains of Montpelier, determined to plead her cause in person at the Court of Rome, and accordingly repaired thither, in 1213. Though Innocent III., who then occupied the papal throne, was the great friend of the King of Aragon, the Queen's rights were too well established by the fact of the existence of her first husband's wives (Doña Guillerma de la Barca, and Beatrix, daughter of the Count of Bigorra) to be set aside, and judgment was pronounced against Don Pedro, who was enjoined to live in peace with his legitimate consort, and to treat her with affection.

Having obtained the justice due to her in this cause, Maria submitted to the Pontiff's decision the dispute between herself and her half-brothers, Guillen and Bernardo de Montpelier, who, though bastards, being the sons of Ines de Entenzi, whom the Lord of Montpelier had married during the life of his wife, the mother of Maria, laid claim to the domains of Montpelier. Here also the

Queen was successful, the decision being entirely in her favour. While preparing to return to Aragon, Maria received the news of her husband's death, that Prince having been slain in battle on the 13th of September, of that year (1213). The widowed Queen survived but a few months, and was buried in Rome in the church of St. Peter. By the Count of Comminge, Maria had the two daughters already mentioned, Matilda and Petrona, and by Don Pedro, James, who succeeded his father.

During the reign of Pedro II., the Spaniards won over the Moors the famous battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, at which were present, with their forces, the Kings of Aragon, Castile, and Navarre, and in which the Christians performed prodigies of valour, being infinitely exceeded in numbers by the Infidels, who amounted, if we may credit the chronicles, to upwards of five hundred thousand men, under the Emperor of Morocco, Mahomet Enacer. Though surnamed "the Catholic" by the Pope, on account of the zeal which he had displayed for the interests of the Church, Pedro took up arms in favour of the Counts of Toulouse, who favoured the heresy of the Albigenses, against the Count Simon de Montfort, who headed the crusade ordered against that sect. The Count de Montfort had been high in favour with Pedro, who admired the military talents of this great chieftain, and had entrusted his son James to his care; but de Montfort having accepted the command of the army that invaded the territories of the Lords of Toulouse, both of whom, father and son, it will be remembered, had married sisters of Don Pedro, that Prince resented it, and undertook to defend them.

The King of Aragon had entreated of the Pope, that, however the heretical Counts might be punished,

their dominions might be respected, as these were the legitimate inheritance of his nephews; but the Pope refused this request, and de Montfort, who coveted these possessions, invaded and ravaged them mercilessly. The King, enraged at the conduct of his former friend, assembled an army, and besieged him in Maurel; but the besieged sallying forth, Pedro was defeated and slain.

By his first wife, a niece of the Count of Forealquer, Don Pedro had one son, Ramon, who died in his infancy. Of this lady we know neither the name nor the dates of her marriage and death, though it was within a short time after her decease, that the King married his second wife, Maria de Montpelier.

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## ELEANOR OF CASTILE.

### 1221.

## VIOLANTE OF HUNGARY.

### 1227.

## TERESA GIL DE VEDAURA.

### 1255.

REIGN OF JAMES II. THE CONQUEROR.

### 1221.

THE reign of James II. is one of the most interesting of the thirteenth century. An orphan ere he had attained his fifth year, heir to a kingdom divided by the factions of his uncles Sancho and Fernando, the childhood of this Prince was surrounded by difficulties and perils, that

doubtless greatly contributed to the early development of the martial spirit he displayed throughout the course of his long and glorious career. Traits are related of his boyish valour that would be deemed incredible, were they not authenticated by the testimony of grave and trustworthy writers. At the death of his father, in 1213, James was a prisoner in the hands of the Count of Montfort; but at the earnest and reiterated entreaties of the Aragonese and Catalans, Pope Innocent III. ordered the Count to give him up to the Cardinal Pedro of Benavente; and the Prince, having been received by a number of nobles and gentlemen in Narbonne, was conducted to Monzon, where he was proclaimed King; and thence to Lerida, where he was sworn. This was the first time that the oath of allegiance had been taken by the people of Aragon, or the Catalans; but it was ever after continued on the accession of a new sovereign, the latter previously swearing to guard and observe the *fueros*, and privileges of his subjects. It was enacted in the Cortes of Monzon, that Sancho, the young King's uncle, should govern the kingdom until the sovereign attained his majority; and the guardianship of the latter was entrusted to Fray Guillen de Monredon, Grand Master of the Templars. To prevent either of his uncles from obtaining possession of the boy-monarch, he was placed in the strong town of Monzon.

No choice could have been more injudicious than that of Sancho as Regent; and his conduct soon became so tyrannical, and his ambitious motives so evident, that the adherents of the young sovereign deemed it necessary that he should abandon his strong retreat, and by his presence endeavour to restore order, and remedy, in some degree, the evils. The miserable state of public affairs at this

crisis was such as to require that some prompt and decisive measures should be taken. The royal exchequer was so poor, that it scarcely provided the necessaries of life to the King; and not only the revenues, but also the domains of the crown, were in the hands of Moors and Jewish usurers, to whom they had been mortgaged during the reign of Pedro II.

The Infante, Don Sancho, confiding in his power, insolently boasted that he would engage to cover with fine scarlet cloth every step James would make in Aragon, after leaving Monzon; so sure was he of keeping him there as long as it suited his convenience. Having been warned of his uncle's intention of seizing him on the road, the Prince, then in his eleventh year, donned a light coat of mail, and at the head of his few, but loyal followers, fearlessly proposed to encounter the superior forces of the rebellious Infante; but the latter, either deceived in some point as to time or place, or advised of the intended resistance, and unwilling to risk taking the life of his nephew, suffered them to proceed unmolested.

The indomitable valour of James was yet tempered with a prudence and command of temper, when circumstances rendered these qualities necessary, which gradually won him the respect and love of his subjects, and secured to him the submission and adhesion of the rebel lords, who, despising his youth, had attempted to assert their own independence at the expense of the Commonwealth.

In 1221, by the advice of the nobles of his council, who thought that an alliance with Castile would greatly strengthen the King's position, James married Eleanor, daughter of Alfonso VIII., by his Queen, Eleanor of England, and aunt to the reigning sovereign of Castile, Fer-

dinand III. The disparity of their ages, the King being but in his thirteenth year, while the Princess was twice that age, was probably the principal cause of the subsequent disunion between the royal consorts. The nuptials were celebrated with the utmost splendour at Agreda, a town on the borders of Aragon and Castile, and continued at Tarragona, where the King was invested with the insignia of knighthood. The King and Queen, being on their progress through the principal towns of Aragon and Catalonia, a quarrel arose between two powerful nobles, Don Nuño Sanchez, son of the Infante Don Sancho, and Don Guillea de Moncado, Viscount of Bearne, who had been intimate friends, but who now, verifying the truth of the adage, that "great events from trivial causes spring," had become inveterate foes. The cause of this deadly feud was no other than the refusal of Don Guillea to part with a goshawk that Don Nuño Sanchez wished to possess. The King, then in his fourteenth year, being at Monzon, was applied to for his protection by Don Nuño, as his antagonist was supported by Hernando, the warlike Abbot of Montarazon, and uncle to the King. Having assembled a number of followers, they waited the approach of Don Guillea to seize him. The youthful monarch assured Don Nuño that justice should be done to both in the Cortes; but that, in the meanwhile, he would take such measures as should ensure him against insult or outrage. Assembling the chief inhabitants of the town, James bade them arm and station themselves at the gates, and admit each lord with but two followers; thus defeating the scheme of Don Guillea.

The power and insolence of the nobles arrived to such a pitch during the year 1225 as would infallibly have ruined a Prince less energetic and persevering than James; but

the perils of his critical situation served to call forth the resources of his powerful intellect, and nerve him to resistance. The power of the monarch was, however, as nothing to that of his great Barons, each of whom was a petty sovereign; and their want of union alone prevented them from entirely subverting the liberties of their oppressed vassals, and enslaving the King, whom they actually held a captive in Saragossa during three weeks. The King, whose spirit could ill brook such insolence, had determined to make his escape through a casement, by means of a ladder; but Eleanor, who was with him, refusing to compromise her dignity by this adventurous mode of egress, James, who was too good a knight to leave the lady behind, gave up a plan which promised him unconditional release, and accepted the terms proposed by his rebellious vassals. As he gradually strengthened himself on the throne, his valour and perseverance conquered every obstacle, and he became one of the most powerful Princes of the time.

Anecdotes are told of his personal encounters with warriors who had been trained to martial exercises, and who were in the full vigour and strength of their age, when James had scarcely emerged from boyhood, yet in which his agility and undaunted spirit left him the victor. Having arrived before the castle of Callas, with but four attendants, he was joined there by several nobles, at the head of some eighty horsemen, to whom he gave orders to arm and prepare to meet the Infante Don Sancho, who was on his way to defend that place. Don Pedro de Pomar, one of the oldest gentlemen of the King's household, represented to him the danger of awaiting with so few men, in an open plain, the arrival of the Infante, and entreated that he would seek a more advantageous and

sheltered position on a neighbouring height, where he might safely await the arrival of the troops which were to join him. "Nay, Don Pedro," replied the King, "pardon me that on this occasion I follow not your advice. It would ill beseem the King of Aragon to retreat before his born vassals, who, without right or reason, come against their lawful lord. Believe me, I will not rise from before this rebellious town, and will subdue it or die upon the field." Don Sancho not arriving on the following day, the town surrendered.

In the year 1229, the Pope sent a legate to Aragon to examine the reasons alleged by the King against the validity of his marriage: and, though it is probable that want of affection was the most potent argument, the plea of consanguinity was admitted, and the divorce granted, though the only son of the disunited pair was declared legitimate,* and acknowledged by James as his successor to the throne of Aragon, while he reserved Catalonia as an inheritance for the issue of any marriage he might subsequently contract. James, in his address to the council assembled to discuss the case, urged no personal motives against his Queen, but treated her with studied courtesy; and as Leonor, on her side, made no opposition to the divorce, it is probable that it had been previously agreed on between them. Eleanor retained her jointure lands, to which the King added large gifts of jewels and plate, and she returned to Castile with the young heir-apparent, who was suffered to remain with the Queen until such time as it should be judged advisable that he

* The children of marriages that were annulled by the Pope were frequently declared legitimate, as the union was supposed to be contracted *bonâ fide* by the parties, and, therefore it would have been unjust to make the offspring suffer, when the fault was unintentional.

should exchange the companionship and soft caresses of his mother for the martial school of his warlike father. Though it was, doubtless, a great consolation to the ex-Queen to retain thus her only child with her, it would have been far more to the boy's advantage had she left him with his father, whose affection, thus deprived of its first object, was soon weaned entirely from the young Alfonso, and rested wholly on the children that were subsequently born of his other Queens. In 1234, Eleanor and her nephew, the King of Castile, had an interview with James, in the town of Hariza, for the settlement of certain differences concerning her jointure. King Ferdinand here attempted to bring about a re-union between the divided pair, but his endeavours were fruitless. The King of Aragon, however, not only confirmed her jointure to Eleanor (in case she continued unmarried), but added to it the town of Hariza. The divorced Queen employed the remainder of her life in pious and beneficent deeds. She was the founder of the religious order of the Promostratenses, and had the monastery near Almazan erected at her own expense. Eleanor died in 1253.

Violante, daughter of Andres, King of Hungary, and of his Queen Violante, was the next wife of James, to whom she was married in 1236. This Princess, whose many virtues are highly extolled by the Aragonese writers, acquired great influence over her husband, who never failed to consult her in all his undertakings. Having, in 1237, resolved on the conquest of the kingdom of Valencia, in spite of the contrary advice of his nobles, who considered the enterprise hazardous in the extreme, even if not utterly impracticable, James bound himself by a vow on the altar of the church of St. Mary del Puch, in the presence of the nobility and soldiery, to remain on the

frontiers until he should have made himself master of that town and kingdom.

That the Queen might feel no anxiety, from his protracted absence, James sent for her and her babe, the Infanta Violante, and communicated to her his determination. The Queen and the Infante, Don Hernando, who had accompanied her, vainly endeavoured to dissuade him from this, in their judgment, desperate project; but with James, whose resolution was too strong to be shaken, and whose firmness bordered on obstinacy, their arguments were useless. After this interview, which took place at Burriana, at which place the Queen was to await the issue of the siege, the King returned to El Puch de Santa Maria, and commenced active operations. After a protracted siege, James attained his object, and on the eve of St. Martin's Day, in September, 1238, entered the famous city of Valencia, thus becoming lord of territory that in fertility and beauty was unsurpassed in the world. Though the constant success that crowned the arms of this favourite of fortune caused him to be respected in his own dominions, and feared abroad, the greatest warrior of his time could neither crush nor expel the demon of discord which had fixed its abode in his own palace, and in the hearts of those nearest and dearest to him.

Alfonso, the estranged son of Eleanor, for whom his father seemed from his infancy to have conceived a dislike which he could ill dissemble, now irritated by the King's reserving Catalonia for the Infante Don Pedro, his son by Violante, retired to the town of Catalazud, where he was joined by many of the nobles who espoused his cause, the natives of Aragon being extremely displeased with the limits fixed to that country in 1243, by which a large

portion of its territory was added to Catalonia. Fearful lest his son would find too ready and willing an ally in his cousin Ferdinand of Castile, who seemed greatly inclined to show favour to his ill-fated relative, James, with his usual forethought, prepared to defend his frontiers from Castile; and, with consummate art, contrived to allay the threatened storm in that quarter by the marriage, in 1246, of his daughter Violante to Prince Alfonso, the heir of the Castilian crown.

In 1248, deeming he might now do so with safety, James made public the division of his dominions among the sons of Violante, which he had determined should take place after his death. To Pedro, the eldest, he gave Catalonia, to which were added the Condado of Rivagorza, belonging to Aragon, and also his conquest of Mallorca and the adjacent islands. To James, his second son, he assigned his new conquest, the kingdom of Valencia; to Hernando, the third son, the Condado of Rousillon, Confluent and Sardinia, the Lordship of Montpelier, and several towns and castles. The fourth son, Sancho, being destined for the church, became Archbishop of Toledo, and to him he bequeathed 3,000 silver marks. In case these sons left no successors, the children to which Violante, wife of Alfonso of Castile, gave birth were to succeed, with the condition that these dominions were never to be added to the crown of Castile, but to be governed by one of her sons.

The injustice thus done to the son of Eleanor rankled deeply in the breast of the Prince, and the King of Castile, in whose palace he had spent his youth, and by whom he was greatly loved, felt no little resentment at the wrongs inflicted on him. Prince Alfonso also gave great offence to his father-in-law, by claiming the town

of Xativa as part of his wife's dower, which town James, at his Queen's suggestion, denied to him; and the Castilian moreover interfered with James's projects of conquests over the Moors. These differences were for the time adjusted by the Queen and Don Lope de Haro, but the flame was only momentarily subdued, to break out anew with increased violence. Doña Violante died in 1255. Besides the sons already mentioned, she had five daughters—Violante, married to the Prince of Castile; Constance, who married Don Manuel, the brother to that Prince; Sancha, who assumed a disguise and went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where she died in the Hospital of St. John in Jerusalem; Isabel, who married Philip the Bold, eldest son of King Louis of France; and Maria, who died a nun, in 1267.

James, much as he had loved and esteemed his second wife, seems to have been by no means inconsolable for her loss, as in the very year of the death of Queen Violante we find him living with Dona Teresa Gil de Vedaura, of whose beauty and wit he is represented as having been deeply enamoured. James did not, however, then declare his marriage, and this circumstance has occasioned doubts to be entertained as to whether it ever really took place, though he acknowledged her children as his legitimate offspring in 1276. This delay in making his union public, and legalizing its issue, may have given some colour to the following account, though it is as stoutly denied by some authors as it is asserted by others. During the interval that elapsed between the King's divorce from Eleanor, and his marriage with Violante, he is said to have been secretly married to Teresa, who brought him two sons.

Possession having extinguished the ardour of the King,

he sought and obtained the hand of the Hungarian Princess, regardless of the sacred ties that bound him to an humbler consort. Resenting his faithlessness, Teresa appealed to the Pope, alleging her prior rights; and the Pontiff having been privately informed by the Bishop of Gerona, to whom the King had revealed it in confession, of the validity of the lady's pretensions, seemed greatly inclined to decide the point in her favour. James, having discovered the source from whence the Pope had obtained his knowledge, in an excess of rage ordered the tongue of the officious informant to be cut out, and banished him from his dominions. For this sacrilegious act the kingdom of Aragon was laid, in 1246, under an interdict, which, however, was raised on the King's performing a penance, and recalling and reinstating the Bishop in his honours. This story is not mentioned by Zurita, and is most strenuously contradicted by Abarca, who alleges many good reasons against its credibility, all tending to prove that James married Teresa after the death of Violante.

Some writers affirm that Teresa was the object of James's boyish love, and that he had already married her, when reasons of state policy commanded his union with the Castilian Princess. This last is the opinion of Garibay, who places Teresa first in the number of James's Queens. Be this as it may, it is proved that James, towards the latter end of his life, lived with Teresa, and that he endeavoured to sever whatever ties might have existed between them, by denying their marriage. The lady, however, was not to be shaken off so easily, and she again laid her cause before the head of the Church. Having sent messengers to Rome, whom she instructed resolutely to defend her outraged honour, and her injured

sons, Teresa retired to the Convent of la Zaidia, there to await the issue of her appeal. Of this difference between James and Teresa there is no doubt, however apocryphal the former may be. The King dying shortly afterwards, having previously legitimized her children, Teresa renounced the title of Queen, and took the veil.

We shall now give a brief sketch of some of the most important events of James's reign, so far as they are connected with his children. In the year 1266, Prince Alfonso greatly strengthened his party by his marriage with Doña Constanza de Moncada, daughter of Don Gaston, Viscount of Bearne, but the nuptial festivities almost immediately gave place to mourning, the ill-fated Prince dying the same year, at the age of thirty-two, regretted for his many amiable and good qualities, and pitied for his unhappy life and untimely end. His death did not extinguish the torch of civil war. The turbulent Catalans, who appear to have possessed, from time immemorial, the same restless, unquiet spirit of which they have given so many proofs at a later period, and even at the present day, seemed resolved to give the King no respite from their discontented clamours.

The death of the Crown Prince now gave rise to contentions between his half-brother Pedro and James, and the nobles, as usual, took different sides and espoused their quarrel. The King, though vexed at these domestic broils, being far more anxious to further the interests of Prince Pedro than he had been those of his neglected eldest son, took measures to obtain for him the hand of Constance, daughter of Manfred, the usurper of the throne of Sicily, and of Beatrix of Savoy, his first wife.*

* Frederick of Suabia had, during his reign, excited the animosity of the Pope, by his toleration of the new sect of the Albigenses; and on his

Though the Pope expressed decided disapprobation, this marriage was concluded in 1262, and, in the same year, the Infanta Isabel was married to the eldest son of the King of France.

In 1271, a new source of uneasiness was added to the burthen of cares that oppressed this powerful sovereign, who had scarcely quelled the incipient symptoms of rebellion which appeared in one quarter, before they broke out in another. An unnatural hatred having sprung up between Prince Pedro and Fernan Gonzalez,

death, Innocent continued to pursue, with even greater virulence, his son Conrad IV., who found himself threatened with the loss, not only of the imperial crown, but also of the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, which had devolved to his house by the marriage of Henry, the son of Frederick Barbarossa, with Constance, the heiress of the Norman Kings, who, after having achieved the conquest of those States, sold them as feofs of the Holy See. On the accession of Conrad, the Pontiff took measures to repossess himself of the tributary territories, and the King found it necessary to defend them by force of arms. While thus engaged, his sudden death left the disputed kingdoms under the governance of his infant son, and Innocent prepared to resume them, believing himself at such a moment, certain of success. Conrad had, however, an illegitimate brother, named Manfred, who was at once a politic Prince and an able warrior, and who instantly assumed the government, in the name of his nephew, Conradin, and opposed the claim of the Pontiff. Irritated by this unexpected obstacle, Innocent, who expressed great indignation at his interference, summoned to his assistance Charles of Anjou, the brother of St. Louis, King of France, and having solemnly invested him with the sovereignty of Naples and Sicily, invested all such as should aid him in conquering those kingdoms, with the privileges accorded to Crusaders. It was in order to strengthen himself against this formidable foe, that Manfred, resolved at any price to resist the dismemberment of Conradin's inheritance, dispatched messengers to Aragon, offering the hand of his daughter Constance to Don Pedro, with a dowry of 100,000 ducats, and the prospect of succeeding to the crowns of the contested States, in the event of Conradin's death, Manfred himself having no male heirs.—Ed.

a natural son of the King, the latter, urged beyond the limits of endurance by his fierce brother, finally raised the standard of revolt. James, whom no persuasions on the part of his nobles could induce to pardon his son, even when repentant of his rashness, continually excited Prince Pedro to the severest measures against him, and Fernan Gonzalez was at length taken and put to death by his relentless half-brother, in 1275. This atrocious fratricide, far from meeting with the King's disapprobation, seemed to give him pleasure, and, strange as it may appear, he openly rejoiced at the death of his son. Though James, in this same year, permitted the establishment of the Inquisition in Aragon, he had the good sense to refuse paying to the Pope the tribute promised by his father, replying to the Pontiff's demand, that his ancestors and himself had won their dominions from the Infidel with their good swords, and that it would ill become him to hold them of the Pope. After a long reign, during which this warrior King fought thirty pitched battles with the Moors, feeling the rapid approaches of death, James abdicated the crown in favour of Don Pedro, and died shortly after, on the 27th of July, 1276.

This monarch,* on whose baby-brow an impoverished

* The new object that had taken possession of the King's heart, was doubtless the cause of his anxiety to get rid of Doña Teresa. In an interview that took place, in 1265, between the sovereigns of Castile and Aragon, James became enamoured of Doña Berengaria Alfonso, a natural daughter of the Infante Alfonso (the King's brother), and consequently, niece of the King of Castile. This lady, who was in attendance on the Queen of Castile, though the lover was fifty-eight, an age when the gift of pleasing is generally wanting, consented, forgetful of every other consideration, to accompany him back to his own dominions, and to live as

and disputed crown had been placed, and who now left it to his successor secure, and enriched with the brilliant gems of Valencia and Mallorca, was lavishly endowed by nature with the physical as well as mental gifts that so well qualified him for the part he was to enact. One of the tallest men in his kingdom, with muscular, agile, and well-proportioned limbs, handsome and striking features, and an erect, graceful, and dignified carriage, which took from his uncommon stature all appearance of awkwardness, James might be pronounced the perfection of manly beauty; while nerves of iron, and a constitution that had never, from childhood to the period of his death, been shaken by any of the diseases incidental to humanity, well fitted the royal soldier for the continual and excessive fatigues and hardships he seemed to seek rather than to avoid during the whole course of his existence.

Inured to every vicissitude of weather, seldom laying aside the armour which he wore alike during the suffocating heat of summer and the excessive cold of winter; sleeping as soundly on the bare and frozen ground as on the sumptuous couch of his palace apartments; foremost in the van wherever danger was rife, and sharing with his men not only the perils, but the privations of an active military life, James seemed to bear a charmed existence.

The annals of his own reign, written by himself, wit-

his mistress until his death. Some writers assert that Doña Berengaria was the fourth wife of James, and, if we take into consideration the high birth of the lady, and the facility with which the King seemed to loose and unloose the gordian-knot of matrimony, this assertion may not appear unfounded.

ness that, like the illustrious Roman, this second Cæsar was gifted with the ability to wield the pen as well as the sword; and the improvements and additions which he introduced into the Aragonese code show him to have possessed the talents of an able legislator; while his courteous and elegant manners fully entitled him to the reputation he had obtained of being the most gallant and accomplished Prince in Europe. Though imbued with a spirit of conquest that seldom allowed his sword to rest in its sheath, James ever manifested the greatest aversion to shedding Christian blood; while he was constantly at war with the Infidels, from whom he wrested the kingdoms of Valencia and Mallorca, and recovered that of Murcia. He would not be persuaded to avail himself of the opportunity that offered of possessing himself of Leon, relinquished his rights to Navarre and the Condado of Toulouse, and gave up to Castile his conquest of Murcia. It is said that he never signed a sentence of death without openly lamenting the necessity.

The contemporary of two great sovereigns, St. Louis of France and St. Ferdinand of Castile, James was superior to them in every kingly virtue; and his reign, the longest since the days of Solomon, is one of the most glorious in the annals of Spain. It may be objected that the injustice shown to his eldest son, and the implacable resentment with which his natural son was hunted to death, are traits of character utterly incompatible with those humane and kind feelings we have ascribed to him; but the gentlest natures may be wrought up to a state of excitement that leads them to commit actions the most foreign to their native disposition; and at this distance of time, it is impossible to judge of the conduct of James in

cases where he may have been provoked by circumstances of which we have no knowledge.

> " Children are disobedient, and they sting
> Their fathers' hearts to madness and despair,
> Requiting years of care with contumely."
> * * * * *
> " His outraged love perhaps awaken'd hate,
> And thus he *was* exasperated to ill."

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## CONSTANCE OF SICILY.

### 1276.

REIGN OF PEDRO III., THE GREAT.

CONSTANCE was the daughter by his first wife, Beatrix, of Manfred, the usurper of the throne of Sicily, in 1262. She was married to Pedro, the eldest son, by his wife, Violante, of James the Conqueror; and on the death of that sovereign, in 1276, was crowned Queen of Aragon.* Don Pedro was the first King who availed himself of the privilege conceded to his grandfather by the Pope, of being crowned by the Archbishop of Tarragona, in the name of the Pontiff. He, however, introduced a modification in the form, which took away all acknowledgment of holding the crown of the Church, by protesting, previous to his coronation, " that he did not receive the

* At the period of his father's death, Don Pedro was engaged in war with the Moors, and refused to assume the sovereign title until some months subsequently, when he had defeated the enemy. He was then crowned, with his Queen, at Saragossa, and at the same time, the oath of fidelity was taken by the grandees of the kingdom, to his son Alfonso.—ED.

crown from the Archbishop in the name of the Church of Rome, either for or against her."

Manfred, who had usurped the crown of Sicily from his nephew, Conradino, Duke of Soissons, was in turn defeated and slain by the forces of Charles of Anjou, on whom the Pope had, *ex sua autoritate,* bestowed the kingdom; and that Prince having caused Conradin, the rightful successor, to be beheaded on a scaffold, together with his young cousin, Frederick, Duke of Austria, Constance, being the next in kin to the murdered Prince, became entitled to the disputed crown.

The despotic government of Charles having given great offence to the Sicilians, already exasperated by the cold-blooded death inflicted on their Princes, they deputed the famous Procida to entreat of the King of Aragon that he would rescue them from the yoke of the French, and take possession of the crown, to which he was entitled in right of his wife. This invitation, given soon after the massacre of the French by the Sicilians in the Vespers of Palermo, was too thoroughly in accordance with the ambitious views of Pedro, who had inherited much of his father's spirit of enterprise and conquest, to be disregarded; but with the political dissimulation that was his distinguishing characteristic, he carefully concealed his intentions from his most intimate friends, leaving them in doubt whether his warlike preparations were intended for the conquest of Constantine in Africa, or that of Sicily, and replying to the direct question addressed to him by the Count of Pallas, in the name of the nobles:—"If my left hand were to find out the purposes of my right, I would cut it off."

Having, in spite of the opposition of Pope Martin, who vainly fulminated the censures of the Church against him,

accomplished his object, the King sent for Constance, who, with her eldest son, Alfonso, had been left Regent in Aragon during his absence. The Queen, accompanied by her children, James, Fadrique, and Violante, made her entrance into the city of Palermo on the 22nd of April, 1283, and was enthusiastically greeted as their sovereign by the Sicilians.

The Infante Don Jaime having been sworn heir to his mother's rights, Don Pedro left Palermo to answer the cartel sent to him by Charles of Anjou. This curious incident, so consonant with the chivalrous spirit of times past, when almost every difference was left to the arbitrament of the sword, throws too much light on the character of Pedro to be omitted.

The French Prince, enraged by the continued success that had hitherto attended the arms of the Aragonian monarch, and unable in the field to check his advances, determined to attempt in person the retrieval of his fortunes, and to this end sent him a personal challenge. The purport of the message, which was delivered by two friars (?) to Don Pedro in the presence of his nobles, was to the following effect, and in nearly these terms: "You, Don Pedro, King of Aragon, having in the guise and semblance of a robber bandit, rather than as an honourable knight, entered Sicily, and, without any previous declaration of war, attacked and worsted King Charles in several battles, though that Prince had never been your enemy, and holds his kingdom from the Church, our rightful Lord and King has determined to prove by personal combat that you have usurped and taken from him by unfair and iniquitous means his dominions, acting as chief and captain of his rebellious subjects, and as such he sends you his defiance."

The bearers of this cartel not having been provided with the necessary credentials, were dismissed without an answer; but, lest this might be attributed to lack of courage, Don Pedro sent the Viscount of Castelnon and Don Pedro de Queralt to Rijoles, to inquire of Charles whether the message had been sent by him, and in that case to give an answer in the King's name. Charles acknowledging the challenge, repeated it in the same terms; but when he uttered the words, "Don Pedro having unfairly entered Sicily," he was interrupted by the Viscount: "Whosoever saith this lies," he exclaimed; "and my lord the King will make good his claim with his royal person against yours, giving you whatsoever advantages of time, place, and circumstances you may desire, or that your age may render necessary; or should you decline a single combat, let it be a contest maintained by ten against ten, fifty against fifty, or one hundred against one hundred." Pledges were then exchanged, and judges chosen to arrange the time and place for this royal encounter, the settlement of the dispute being left to the two Kings with one hundred knights on each side.

The terms having been stipulated, it was agreed that the combat should take place on the plain before Bourdeaux, in the dominions of the King of England, that sovereign being also chosen master of the camp. The contending Kings, and forty knights on each side, were sworn to keep the prescribed conditions, one of which was that a truce should be observed during a certain number of days, and that whosoever should fail to present himself on the day appointed (1st of June), should be ever after held a vanquished, perjured, and recreant knight, unworthy of the title of King, and be despoiled of the insignia of royalty. The Pope, however, unwilling that Charles should stake

his rights on the chances of a personal combat, commanded him to refrain, and absolved him from his oath. Pedro, though advised that his antagonist, availing himself of the pretext of the Pontiff's opposition, would not meet him, was deterred by no consideration from fulfilling his word, and regardless of the perils to which he was exposed in a journey through a country swarming with the adherents of Charles, gave orders to the knights chosen to maintain his cause, that they should, in detached parties, meet him at Boulogne. The King performed this dangerous undertaking, accompanied only by three knights, who, as well as himself, were disguised as servants to their guide, a dealer in horses, called Domingo de la Figuera.

The little party arrived safely on the appointed day on the plain of Bourdeaux, and one of the knights, Don Gilabert de Cruillas, was sent to inform Juan de Grilla, Seneschal of the King of England, that a gentleman from the King of Aragon desired to speak with him outside the gates. On the appearance of the Seneschal, accompanied by several gentlemen, Pedro led him aside, and, without revealing himself to him, inquired whether he was prepared, in the name of the English sovereign, to hold the camp, and ensure, according to agreement, against any treason, the King of Aragon and his knights, who were to do their duty on that day, as good men and true. The Seneschal replied that he had already advised the King of Aragon, through his ambassador, that King Charles was in the town with a multitude of men-at-arms, and that he neither could nor would ensure the safety of the King of Aragon; who, should he persist in coming, would run an imminent hazard of remaining prisoner. Don Pedro then expressed a wish to enter the lists, and this being granted,

he rode several times round them, when, having repassed the gates, he revealed himself to the Seneschal, saying, "'If you or your King are ready to hold the camp, we and our knights are ready to do battle." In spite of the entreaties of the Seneschal, that he would instantly secure his safety by a prompt departure from this dangerous vicinity, Pedro absolutely refused to do so until a notary had been called to certify that he had been punctual to the rendezvous. Ere he departed, the King left his helmet, shield, lance, and sword with the Seneschal, to be hung up in the lists in token of his having been present there.

Don Pedro was soon after forced to return to Aragon, to defend his own dominions, which had been invaded by the King of France, with a design of creating a diversion in favour of his nephew, Charles of Anjou; and though the French were defeated and forced to retreat, having lost by the ravages of the plague their King and a great part of their army, Don Pedro was unable to profit much by their discomfiture, or to secure permanently the advantages he had gained, being carried off in his forty-sixth year, after a short illness, on the 10th of November, 1285, while on his way to take possession of the dominions of his brother the King of Mallorca, that Prince having leagued with the enemies of Don Pedro. French historians assert that he died of a wound in the eye, received three months previous to his death, in the last engagement with the French, but the truth of the account is strongly denied by the Aragonese historians.*

* A few hours before he expired, the Archbishop of Taragona absolved him from the sentence of excommunication which had been fulminated against him by the Pope (Martin), and he was interred in the church of Santa Crux, at Villa Franca.—Ed.

During his short reign, Pedro was almost incessantly harassed by civil disturbances. Shortly after his accession, an insurrection took place in Catalonia, which it occasioned him some trouble to quell. The restless Catalans complained of the King's delay in holding a Cortes in that province, and of his having assumed the crown without taking the usual oath, that he would keep inviolate their fueros. The malcontents were headed by the Counts of Fox, Pallas and Urjel, the Viscount of Cardona, and other powerful lords. Pedro, having vainly endeavoured by expostulatious and mild measures to pacify the disaffected, assembled an army of 100,000 foot and 3,000 horse, and besieged the rebels in Balaquer, the inhabitants of which taking part with the King, the chiefs were compelled to surrender and throw themselves on the sovereign's mercy. Several were imprisoned for some time, in the castle of Lerida, but on the payment of a certain fine, they were released. The numerical force of the King seems to be exaggerated, but we find the numbers thus stated in Abarca, and many authors agree in saying that the army was one of the most numerous of that age.

In 1284, the storm broke out in another quarter. The inhabitants of Aragon, anticipating the invasion of the French, and rightly conjecturing that the conquest of Sicily would cost the former country dear, endeavoured to check the King's martial ardour, and, organizing the ancient Aragonian association of the *Union*,* sorely per-

* The privilege claimed by the Aragonese nobles of resorting to arms on any infringement of their liberties by the monarch, was set forth at large in two celebrated ordinances, signed and formally approved by Alfonso III., in 1287, entitled the "Privileges of Union." Under this formidable

plexed the sovereign, whose Catalan subjects, however, gave their hearty concurrence to his plans, and bore with patience the greatest proportion of the expenses of the war. The Catalans were also much less sensitive on the score of scruples of conscience than the Aragonians, who were keenly affected by the censures, anathemas, and interdicts of the Pope, and vehemently urged the King to accede to the wish of the Pontiff, who demanded that Sicily should be restored to the French Prince.

Pedro united to a most romantic valour, the talents of a good general and an able politician, and had he lived some years longer, he would probably have secured the crown of Sicily to his descendants with less effusion of blood than it subsequently cost. Besides his legitimate children, he left seven by two mistresses,—James, John, and Beatrix, by Maria Nocolas, and Pedro, Ferdinand, Blanca, and Teresa, by Doña Inez Zapata. He was succeeded on the throne of Aragon by his eldest son, Alfonso, surnamed "the Frank," and on that of Sicily by James, who, previous to his father's death, had been sworn heir to that kingdom.

Constance, who had been left by her husband, during his expeditions against the French, Regent of Sicily, with her son James, was every way worthy of the important trust confided to her, and remained in this, her native island, till within a short time of her death. Her wise and truly maternal administration greatly endeared her to the Sicilians; and her humanity was evidenced in the prompt and efficient measures by which she saved the life of Charles the Lame, Prince of Salerno, from the vin-

*charter of rebellion*, as we may term it, combinations of the nobles and the citizens against the sovereign were frequent.

dictive rage of the inhabitants of Messina. This Prince had been created by his father, Charles of Anjou, Governor of Naples, when Roger de Lauria appeared before that city with the Sicilian fleet, on the 18th of June, 1284. The Neapolitan galleys that lay in the harbour were immediately filled by the Italian troops, headed by the Prince himself, and prepared to repulse the enemy. The Admiral, however, as if appalled by these preparations, stood out to sea, apparently declining the combat. This ruse had the desired effect; the thoughtless Charles, flushed with the hope of defeating the hitherto indomitable Roger, and by this bold stroke retrieving the fortunes of his house, despite his father's positive injunctions to remain on the defensive, abandoned the shelter of the harbour, and pursued the retreating fleet. So confident of success were the Neapolitans, that they held in their hands the cords with which they intended to hang the foes they already deemed vanquished, and called attention to them, with shouts of derision.

The wily de Lauria, having obtained his object, now turned on the incautious Neapolitans, and, after a hard-fought battle, in which the French displayed the brilliant courage that has ever distinguished them, the superior skill and experience of the Spaniards obtained the mastery. After a most obstinate resistance, the flower of the gentlemen and knights, both French and Italian, with the Prince himself, despite the prodigies of valour performed in his defence, were captured and taken to Messina. On his arrival at the palace, the Queen, wishing to spare the hapless Prince the humiliation of being seen by her sons, James and Frederick, caused him to be immediately conveyed to the fortress of Matagrifon, allowing him the society of his chief favourite, William of Estandardo.

The inhabitants of Messina, transported with an almost delirious joy by this important victory, and exasperated by the sight of Prince Charles, which revived the memory of the tyranny so lately exercised by his father, rose, *en masse*, and forcibly entering the towers where many of the principal French and Provençal Barons were confined, ruthlessly massacred them. The attack was so sudden that above seventy gentlemen were butchered by the furious mob ere they could be dispersed and order restored, though the measures taken to that effect by the Queen were as prompt and decisive as the urgency of the case required.

The question, of what should be done with the captive Prince, was deliberated in the Cortes held at Messina, and it was decreed that he should suffer the same fate to which his father, under similar circumstances, had so pitilessly doomed the gallant young Conradin. The sentence being intimated to the royal prisoner, he sent a message to the Queen, returning thanks to her, "inasmuch as to the favours already conferred on him was added that of ordering that his death should take place on Friday, the day on which the Prince of Innocents had been slain." But the Queen was too just to allow of so inhuman a retaliation; and she sent an answer to Charles, the purport of which was, that, if the prospect of dying on Friday was to him a source of gratification, a still greater happiness would be derived by her from the exercise of the power which she possessed, of saving his life on that day on which Christ, the King of saints and sinners, had given his own to redeem all others.

With her usual tact, concealing from the irritated Sicilians her real intentions, she objected to the sentence being carried into effect until the King was consulted,

and wrote to him ostensibly for that purpose, but in reality urging, in the strongest terms, the propriety of sparing the life of the Prince. In order to secure him against any farther attempt on the part of the excitable populace, the Queen caused him to be removed to the castle of Cephalu, that fortress being much stronger and less liable to attacks than that of Matagrifon. Don Pedro was too good a knight to approve of the decree of the Cortes, and deeply lamenting the death of the unhappy gentlemen who had already fallen victims to an infuriated populace, commanded that all the rest of the prisoners should be set at liberty under promise of never bearing arms against him—a promise kept by one alone, whose name, consecrated by his scrupulous observance of the laws of honour, has been recorded with the praise which it deserves. The Admiral Reginaldo Gallardo was the only knight of all those who were liberated who felt himself bound to keep the condition under which his freedom was granted.

The day that proved so fatal to the Prince of Salerno was a joyful one to Beatrix, sister of Constance, who, since the death of her father, Manfred, had been kept a close prisoner, and who now recovered her freedom, after a captivity of eighteen years. Pedro having sent orders that the Prince should be conveyed to Catalonia, Prince James waited on him ere he left Sicily, and Charles agreed to purchase his liberty on the following terms: That he, Charles, would renounce the title of King of Sicily, and all claim on that kingdom, in favour of James and his heirs, giving to that Prince his daughter Blanche in marriage, and to Frederic, the next brother, another daughter, together with the principality of Tarento; that Louis, Charles's second son, should marry Violante, the

Infanta of Aragon, and receive Calabria as her dower; that the children of Charles, with several French and Provençal Lords, should remain as hostages to the King of Aragon; that Charles should pay to that monarch a certain sum of money; and that within the space of two years, this agreement should receive the sanction and approbation of the Pontiff, the Prince binding himself to return and place himself in the hands of the King of Aragon at the expiration of that time, should these conditions not have been fulfilled.

To relate the vicissitudes of the long war, which desolated for many years the fertile plains of Sicily, would greatly exceed the limits of my task, and I will merely record those incidents connected with them that relate to the Dowager Queen of Aragon and Sicily.

Alfonso, King of Aragon, her eldest son, dying in 1291, her second son, James, inherited his crown, and, being obliged to quit Sicily, left his brother Fadrique Regent of that kingdom. James, having subsequently, with a view of making peace with France and the Pope, renounced all right and title to Sicily, the Sicilians, indignant at his thus tamely surrendering the conquest so dearly purchased by his brave father, and giving them up to their former hated tyrants, crowned his young brother Fadrique, who, having been brought up among them, was greatly beloved. The crown thus bestowed on Fadrique was truly one of thorns, for, with the unaided forces of Sicily, weakened, moreover, as that country was, by civil dissensions, he had to carry on a war with the powerful King of France, and his own brother, the King of Aragon, who had bound himself to aid in ejecting him should he accept the sovereignty. But Fadrique, though young, was fully equal to the arduous duties he was called on to

perform, having inherited from his mother that prudence which had ever characterized her, and from his great father all his indomitable courage and perseverance.

Constance herself, however, towards the close of her life, seems to have lost the energy that had formerly led her to urge her husband to the conquest of her inheritance; and the strength of intellect and of will, which had once made her treat with indifference the Pope's opposition, though that opposition came in the dread form of an interdict, and maintain herself and her sons in the sovereignty of the isle of her birth, entirely forsook her as she advanced in years. Fadrique was left by his mother to struggle as he could with the great powers leagued to crush him; and in 1297, Constance repaired to Rome, to receive the absolution of the Pope, and to marry her daughter Violante to her son's antagonist, Robert, Duke of Calabria. Constance died in Barcelona in 1302, and was followed to the tomb in the same year by her daughter Violante. So careful was she in her last moments of endangering her own salvation by any acknowledgment of her son's rights, that she calls him in her testament, not King of Sicily, but Fadrique, Infanta of Aragon, and leaves him two towns to be delivered to him when he should be reinstated in the favour of Holy Church. Strange, that bigotry should thus have neutralized all the firmness and good sense of which this Princess had given so many proofs. Her pusillanimous conduct, in this instance, throws a shadow over the otherwise fair character of this Princess.

Constance gave birth to three sons, Alfonso III., who succeeded his father on the throne of Aragon, James, who was at first King of Sicily, and on the death of Alfonso succeeded him on the throne of Aragon, and Fadrique, or

Frederick, who became King of Sicily. She had also two daughters, Violante, who married Robert, second son of Charles of Anjou and cousin to the King of France, and Isabel, who became Queen of Portugal.

NOTE.—Charles of Anjou died in the beginning of 1285, and was succeeded in his titles, estates, and pretensions to the crown of Italy by his son, Charles the Lame, at the time a prisoner in Aragon.

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## ISABEL OF CASTILE.

## BLANCHE OF ANJOU.

## MARIA, INFANTA OF CHIPRE.

## ELISEN DE MONCADA.

REIGN OF JAMES II., (THE JUST).

### 1291.

JAMES, having succeeded his brother Alfonso* on the throne of Aragon in 1291, from motives of policy contracted an alliance with Castile, in November of the first year of his reign. The bride, then in her ninth year, was Isabel, daughter of Sancho the Brave and his Queen, Maria.† Similar motives subsequently directing a mar-

* Alfonso III. died in 1291, on the 18th of June, in the sixth year of his reign, while preparing to receive his destined bride, Eleanor of England. He was succeeded by his brother James, the King of Sicily.

† The nuptial ceremonies were performed at Calatayud with great pomp, and were followed by court festivals and public rejoicings. Tournaments and other warlike games occupied a considerable lapse of time; and as great demonstrations were made as though the baby-bride had been destined to reign over her new kingdom throughout a long life.—ED.

riage with Blanche of Anjou, the King of Aragon, availing himself of the usual plea of consanguinity, and of the Pope's refusal to grant a dispensation, in 1296, the first marriage was annulled, and Isabel returned to Castile.

The second wife of James was Blanche, daughter of Charles, surnamed the Lame, Duke of Anjou, King of Naples, and pretender to the kingdom of Sicily.

The conditions stipulated in the marriage treaty were: that the Princess should receive a dowry of 100,000 silver marks; that the King of Aragon should send back to Charles that Prince's three sons, who had been kept as hostages in Aragon; that all prisoners taken during the war by the Aragonese should be set at liberty; that James should restore Sicily, Calabria, and the other domains of Naples, to the Church; that, in case of resistance to this clause on the part of the Sicilians, he should use such means to compel their compliance as the Pope should determine; that the Pope, on his part, should revoke all the censures fulminated against the Kings of Aragon, and ratify all that had been done while these were in force, granting to the present sovereign and his successors the investiture of the kingdom of Sardinia; that the King of France and his brother Charles, calling himself King of Aragon, should renounce all claims, and desist from all pretensions made to the crown of Aragon; and that Charles should absolve the King of Aragon from the payment of the 30,000 silver marks, given in trust to the late King Alfonso.

Thus did James, for the sake of being reinstated in the good graces of the Church, tamely resign the beautiful island he had inherited from his mother, and which his father had spent so much blood and treasure to conquer. To satisfy his conscientious scruples, he treache-

rously gave up his loyal and loving Sicilian subjects to their hated foes.

Of Blanche, little is recorded. She gave birth to ten children: James, who, abdicating his right to the succession, became a member of the religious and military order of Montesa; Alfonso, born in 1299, who succeeded to the throne; Pedro, Count of Ampurias; Ramon Berenguer, Count of Prades; Juan, Archbishop of Toledo; Constance, who married Don Juan Manuel, grandson of Fernando III.; Maria, who married Pedro, Infante of Castile, son of Sancho IV.; Blanche, Prioress of the monastery of Sixena; and Violante, who married the Prince of Tarento.

Blanche founded, in 1300, a convent in Saragossa; an act of piety which probably procured her the praise bestowed on her of being "a right excellent and Christian Princess."

After the death of Blanche, James married twice; but of these two Queens nothing but their name is preserved. The first was Maria, Infanta of Cyprus;* the second, Elisen de Moncada, a lady of high rank, sister of Don Ot de Moncada.

Though James had promised to assist in compelling the Sicilians to submit to his father-in-law, he showed little alacrity in prosecuting an unnatural war with his own brother, Fadrique, whom the justly indignant Sicilians had raised to the throne; and when, after a gallant resistance, the fleet of the latter was defeated by that of the Aragonese, and their young King might easily have been captured, James not only connived at his brother's escape, but returned to Naples, and thence to his own

* Who became the mother of three sons and several daughters.—Ed.

dominions, protesting, in spite of the remonstrances of the Pope, that he had performed his part of the treaty, and would take no further share in the contest.

The part taken by James in the troubles of Castile, in aiding and abetting the La Cerdas in their struggle for the crown, is noticed in the Annals of Maria the Great (*vide* Queens of Castile).

The conduct of his eldest son, James, was a source of great vexation to James II. The renunciation of that Prince to his right of succession is related in the Life of Leonora, reign of Alfonso IV.

During the reign of James II., the fall of the Knight Templars occurred—that most famous and powerful order of the Church militant, so shamefully persecuted by Philip IV., King of France. When, in 1312, the Council of Vienna abolished the Order, and confiscated its immense wealth, James II., in conjunction with the Kings of Castile and Portugal, procured an honourable exemption for the knights of the Spanish Commendaries, who were permitted to retain their possessions during their lives.

James died in 1327, leaving the throne to his second son, Alfonso IV.

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## LEONORA.

### 1329.

DON ALFONSO IV.

THE first wife of Alfonso was Doña Teresa de Entenza, Countess of Urgel, by whom he had Alfonso Pedro, who succeeded him; James, Count of Urgel; Constance, who

married James, King of Mallorca; Isabel, and Sancho. The two last, and Alfonso, the first-born, died young. Doña Teresa, dying in child-bed a few days previous to the death of her father-in-law, never bore the title of Queen of Aragon; and Alfonso subsequently married Leonora, Infanta of Castile, by whom he had Fernando, Marquis of Tortosa and Juan. This Princess, daughter of Ferdinand IV., King of Castile, and of his Queen, Constance of Portugal, had been betrothed, when but four years of age, in 1311, to James, Prince of Aragon, eldest son of King James II.; and in 1319, on attaining her thirteenth year, she became his wife. The singular temper of the bridegroom, who, renouncing the throne, subsequently became a monk, caused the marriage to be annulled.

This Prince, whose furious disposition and irritable temper led him to commit such acts of violence against some of the principal lords, that his father deemed it necessary to put a check on so wanton an exercise of the privileges of his birth, became moody and discontented; and, to vex his kind parent, declared his intention to renounce the crown, and assume the cowl of the monk. Vainly did the amiable monarch, after trying every other argument, finally offer to abdicate the throne in his favour: the obstinate and weak-minded Prince persevered in his resolution, not, however, from any decided vocation for the monastic life, but, as he openly avowed, to cause pain to his father, and defeat his hopes. He, however, yielded to the King's persuasions so far, that he allowed the nuptial ceremonies between himself and Leonora to be performed, but he refused to give the young bride the *kiss of peace,* or to conduct her back to the palace; and, on leaving the church, he withdrew to a neighbouring

town, to the great sorrow and indignation of the royal family, who remained assembled, anxiously waiting his return.

By the formal renunciation of the Crown Prince in Tarragona this same year, Alfonso, his next brother, became heir to the throne. It was decreed, however, that Leonora should yet be Queen of Aragon; and though, in 1328, she returned to Castile a maid and a divorced wife, she went again to Aragon in the following year to become the second wife of Alfonso. During her short residence in Castile, Leonora had been promised to the Infante Pedro of Aragon, but she preferred a King, though that King was a widower with children, to a Prince who had no chance of ever wearing a crown, and consequently accepted Alfonso.

This second marriage was the cause of bitter animosities and great disturbances in the royal family, for Leonora having, like too many step-mothers, conceived for her step-son Pedro an aversion, doubtless originating from a jealousy of his right to the succession, to the exclusion of her own children, used all her influence with the King to advance the interests of the latter, greatly to the detriment of those of the Crown Prince.

Young Pedro soon felt the effects of the cold atmosphere which so often surrounds a step-mother, and from his boyhood upwards repaid her hatred with usury. Taking advantage of the enfeebled state of the sovereign's health, who, from the time of his second marriage, had been afflicted with the dropsy, Leonora obtained from him the most extravagant grants to her own sons. Among these was the rich Lordship of Tortosa, besides many strongly fortified towns and fortresses in Valencia, on the borders of Castile, which were of the utmost importance

in time of war. Many of the members of the council expressed their decided disapprobation of donations, which not only impoverished the crown, but threatened to prove a fertile source of evils, and the city of Valencia, in particular, was violent in its opposition.

Don Pedro, who, though but thirteen years of age, seemed perfectly cognizant of the degree in which his interests were affected by the dismemberment of his inheritance, obstinately refused to give to these measures the sanction which was required from him as Crown Prince, and excited the chief lords to such a degree, that they addressed a respectful but energetic remonstrance to the King, in presence of the Queen and Court. The eloquence of the speaker had the desired effect on the sovereign, who, convinced of the error he had committed, immediately revoked the donations. It would have been well if he had not been so ungallant as to add, that all blame was to attach to the Queen. The latter, irritated by what she deemed his pusillanimity, expressed her surprise and anger in no measured terms, saying that, had the seditious and insolent language of the nobles been addressed to her brother, the King of Castile, it would have been punished with death; upon which the King, with moderation and prudence, replied that his people enjoyed more freedom than the Castilians, and that they loved and respected him as their liege lord, while he held them in the light of good and true vassals, friends, and comrades.

Leonora, baffled in her endeavours, sought to wreak her vengeance on those whom she suspected of being inimical to her plans, and attached to the interests of the Crown Prince. These were first expelled from the Court, and then summoned to answer the charges which she caused

to be brought against them. Two of the accused, aware of the malice that suggested these proceedings, refused to appear; but the secretary, Concut, imprudently confiding in his innocence, unhesitatingly presented himself to the King, who, though he lacked firmness to resist the will of Leonora, could not forbear cautioning his old servant, advising, nay, ordering him to retire and provide for his safety, as the Queen was bent on effecting his ruin. But Concut refused to fly, saying that he had ever served the King loyally and to the best of his ability, and therefore could have no cause to fear. He was seized in Teruel on the following day, put to the question, drawn, hung, and proclaimed a traitor. The motive assigned for this barbarous execution was, that Concut was convicted of having administered a drug to the Queen, with the design of incapacitating her to bear children. The accusation was not only utterly false, but its improbability was the more apparent from the circumstance of the Queen's being already the mother of two boys.

The adherents of the Crown Prince now felt justified in entertaining fears, not only for their own safety, but also for his, Leonora having persuaded the King to remove the tutor and attendants of young Pedro, and replaced them with creatures of her own. Don Pedro de Luna, Archbishop of Saragossa, in whose palace and under whose care the Prince had been left ever since the expedition to Sardinia, in which Alfonso had been accompanied by his first wife, formed a plan, with other men of note, to remove him to the mountain fortress of Iacca, on the frontiers of France, in which country he could, in case of an emergency, take refuge. The flight of the Prince convinced the King of the danger of the projected innovations, and he issued orders that no change should take place in

the Prince's household, and Pedro returned to his old quarters.

The illness of Alfonso making rapid progress, young Pedro, with a steadiness of purpose and zeal far beyond his years, applied himself to the studies that were most fitted to prepare him for the post which it was evident he was so soon to fill, and was early initiated in the cares and toils of government. The powers of dissimulation, the persevering, determined spirit and self-command, with which this boy curbed and concealed his naturally violent temper, and carried out his purposes, is truly surprising. For the space of three years the demon of domestic discord continued to reign in the royal palace, embittering the last days of the weak sovereign, who, however, mindful of the safety of her whom he so dotingly loved, in his dying moments, laid his commands on Leonora that she should leave him and provide against the effects of the enmity of his successor, by a prompt departure from Court. Don Alfonso died in 1338, leaving the memory of a kind and amiable Prince.

The first act of Pedro on his advent to the throne was to order the pursuit and arrest of his step-mother; but Leonora, conscious of having incurred the Prince's hatred, had left the bed-side of her expiring husband a few hours previous to his death; and, goaded by her fears, putting no trust in the strongholds and castles of her sons, although she had taken the precaution to have them well fortified, fled with all the celerity in her power towards Castile. Don Pedro had caused many of the passes to be closed against her, but still the indefatigable Leonora contrived at length to reach Castile, attended by the noble and loyal Don Pedro de Exerica, though forced to leave behind her the riches she had brought away from

the palace, of which the partizans of the new King took care to relieve her on the road. The precipitancy of her flight did not, however, prevent Leonora from seeking to conciliate her foe, for whom she left a long, submissive, and affectionate message, expressive of a confident reliance on his justice and affection which she was far from feeling. The King, seeing that his intended victim had escaped, returned an answer, couched in respectful, but ambiguous terms.

The ceremonies of the late King's funeral were followed by those of the new sovereign's coronation, which were performed with the most extravagant pomp and munificent hospitality, the table in the royal palace of the Aljaferia being spread for the entertainment of ten thousand guests. But amid the rejoicings which hailed his advent to the throne, the revengeful Pedro forgot not the past, and was already planning measures to deprive his half-brothers of the inheritance left them by their father. The vigilant Leonora, however, who was, probably, well acquainted with the temper of her step-son, and consequently anticipated these attempts, persuaded her brother Alfonso to send an embassy to Pedro, requesting him to confirm the donations made to his sons by the late King. The crafty Pedro, who was fully resolved to grant nothing, replied, notwithstanding, in terms of great courtesy to the King of Castile, and of great regard for Leonora and her sons, the substance of his answer being that the testament could not be opened in consequence of the absence of some of the executors, nor were the donations legal or to be exacted as a right, adding, however, that he neither meant nor desired any wrong to the Dowager Queen or her sons. The intentions of Pedro were so obvious that the King of Castile would have shown some resentment,

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had not his own domestic divisions prevented his taking any active measures against a foreign foe.

Pedro, on his side, aware that he was secure against any attack from Castile, gave the reins to his hatred, sequestrating the estates of Pedro de Exerica and even those of Leonora herself. Proceedings were instituted against the Queen's friends and adherents, under pretence that they had not presented themselves to take the oath at his coronation, they in turn alleging, that it had been administered in terms which allowed of a dangerous interpretation against the Queen and others. Matters soon assumed a threatening aspect, the arraigned parties resorting to arms to protect themselves against the rapacity of Don Pedro, who, though occupied with the ceremonies of his betrothal, found time to pursue his plans of revengeful spoliation. But the fear of a foreign invasion accomplished what even the authority of the Pope had been unable to effect, and the sovereigns of Aragon and Castile, laying aside their disputes, for a time, united to oppose the powerful army of the Moors, which, under the command of Abulmelek, son of Alboazer, King of Morocco, had passed the straits, in June, 1383, and possessed themselves of Algezira and Gibraltar.

Don Pedro, with prudence and bravery far beyond his years, which scarcely numbered nineteen, took prompt and efficacious measures for the defence of his dominions. A treaty was concluded with Castile, in which it was agreed that the incomes of her estates and the revenues of the towns should be paid to Leonora, but that they should remain under the jurisdiction of King Pedro; that the Infantes should be put in possession of their inheritance; that Don Pedro de Exerica should have his estates restored to him; and that, to make the union between the mem-

bers of the royal family sincere and lasting, the sister of Don Pedro de Exerica should marry the Infante Don Ramon Berenguer.

Where no feelings of goodwill existed on either side, and peace had been a measure of temporary necessity rather than of inclination, it was merely a species of truce which lasted only so long as the convenience of the several parties required. The Moors having been completely worsted, the King of Aragon turned his attention to the destruction of his brother-in-law, James, King of Mallorca, whom, under the most futile pretexts, he persecuted until he not only deprived him of his petty sovereignty, which was added to the dominions of Aragon, but also of his life; that hapless monarch, who was in fact more sinned against than sinning, being killed in battle while endeavouring to recover his crown. The impetuous, yet dissembling and hypocritical Pedro, was subsequently too much engaged in civil wars in Aragon and disturbances in Sardinia to quarrel with his neighbour of Castile, but the fire, though smothered for the time, was not extinct, and in 1356 a bloody war broke out between the two sovereigns, which, for a period of ten years, devastated their respective kingdoms.

Pedro, who had succeeded his father Alfonso on the throne of Castile, already gave indications of a temper equalling, if not exceeding in ferocity that of his namesake of Aragon, and stained the commencement of his reign by allowing the cold-blooded murder of a woman. The King of Aragon had extended his protection to Don Enrique de Trastamara and Don Fadrique, Grand Master of Santiago, both half-brothers of the Castilian monarch, and thereby irritated the latter exceedingly. The old

feud between Doña Leonora and her step-son was revived by the continual endeavours which he made to deprive her and her sons of their domains in Aragon; while the unbounded ambition of Leonora was as injurious to her interests in her native Castile, as it had been in her husband's kingdom, and ended most fatally. Though her efforts to secure the crown to her own sons had proved abortive, and even caused her to be exiled from Aragon, her failure proved no lesson to teach her to curb her inordinate love of sway, and she renewed her intrigues in Castile against her nephew, Pedro, and continually excited her sons, now against the one monarch, now against the other.

In 1354 Leonora took an active part against the young King of Castile, whom she proclaimed to be insane, and in a state requiring a guardian; and so effectually did she take her measures, that it was principally through her agency that the government of Castile fell almost entirely into the hands of her son Ferdinand. Leonora was frequently known to say that she would lose her soul but that her son should wear a crown. To strengthen his party, in 1354, Leonora persuaded her son to marry Maria, daughter of Don Pedro, Crown Prince of Portugal, by his wife Constanza Manuel. Ferdinand was slain in 1363, while resisting the orders of Pedro, King of Aragon, who had sent to imprison him, though Fernando had come expressly, and by the King's invitation, to dine in Castellan with that sovereign.

The events of the life of Leonora, from the time of the accession of her nephew Pedro to the crown of Castile, are so much interwoven with those of his turbulent and sanguinary reign, that it would be impossible to separate

them, and I must refer the reader for a continuation of her life to the annals of Blanche of Bourbon, wife of Pedro of Castile.

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## DOÑA MARIA DE NAVARRE.

### 1337.

## DOÑA LEONORA OF PORTUGAL.

### 1348.

## DOÑA LEONORA OF SICILY.

### 1349.

## DOÑA SIBILA DE FORCIA.

### 1381.

REIGN OF PEDRO IV. (OF THE DAGGER).*

THE first of Pedro IV's four wives was Maria, youngest daughter of Don Philip and Doña Juana, sovereigns of Navarre. Juana, the eldest of the Infantas of Navarre, had, during the lifetime of his father, been betrothed to

* Don Pedro derived this surname from the following incident. Having, at the battle of Epila, in 1348, compelled the rebel Barons to submit to his authority, they, in an assembly of the States, made a formal renunciation of the absurd right claimed by "La Union," of resorting to arms on any real or fancied encroachment of their privileges. The King, on his part, solemnly confirmed the ancient national privileges, but, filled with resentment at the sight of the instrument that contained the two obnoxious ordinances of La Union, he cut it in pieces with his dagger, and, in so doing, wounded his hand. Suffering the blood to fall on the mutilated deed, "The blood of a King," he exclaimed, "may well be shed to efface a law that has occasioned the effusion of so much blood."

Pedro, but the Prince giving the preference to her sister, Maria, that Princess was betrothed to him in 1337, the first year of his reign, at which time she was also acknowledged, by her parents, heiress to the crown of Navarre (to the exclusion of her eldest sister), in case they should have no male heirs. This recognition of the Infanta Maria was the more singular, inasmuch as she had three brothers. In October of the same, the Princess, having attained her twelfth year, the nuptials were celebrated. During the life of this Queen, Pedro directed his arms against James, King of Mallorca, though that Prince was married to Constance, Infanta of Aragon and sister of Pedro; but the restless spirit and inordinate ambition of the latter, impelled to attack even those who might have justly felt secured by their close connection with himself from any aggression on his part. Pedro, who was never at a loss for specious pretexts to clothe his arbitrary and iniquitous proceedings, justified his unparalleled usurpation by the most futile and unfounded accusations, and the hapless James, finding his nearest and dearest, even his wife,* turn from him, abandoned by his subjects, hunted from place to place by his untiring brother-in-law, after vainly appealing to the Pope and to

* Constance seems to have led an unhappy life with her husband, of whom she complained frequently to her brother, and whom she finally accused of plotting the murder of the King of Aragon. This accusation was undoubtedly false, and suggested by a wish to revenge some real or fancied wrongs inflicted on herself. Constance seems to have had one of those weak minds, possessing energy and resolution neither for good nor evil, perpetually doing some rash act, of which they repent as soon as committed. Having largely contributed to the ruin of her husband, she subsequently entreated, earnestly and incessantly, to be allowed to join him when a discrowned fugitive, though her brother offered her the Castle of Montblanc as a residence, and an income of 3,000 livres yearly, to induce her to remain with him.

the King of France, and making the most desperate attempts to recover his crown, was finally compelled to resign it to his powerful and insatiable foe.

The reign of Maria is also famous for the attempt made by Pedro to ensure the succession of the crown to his daughter Constance. The Queen having, up to the year 1347, given birth to no son, the King, hopeless of leaving male heirs to succeed him, caused the Infanta Constance to be publicly acknowledged and sworn as his heiress, to the exclusion of his brother James. The latter, finding his respectful remonstrances without effect, immediately repaired to Saragossa, where he was joined by many of the nobles, who, opposed to females succeeding to the throne, formed that league entitled "La Union," which so frequently proved a fertile source of trouble, disquiet and danger to the sovereigns of Aragon. During the civil commotions that ensued in this same year, Doña Maria was delivered of a son, but the joy occasioned by his birth soon gave way to grief, as he survived it but a few hours, and was within five days followed to his grave by his mother. Doña Maria was an amiable and pious Queen, but nothing of any note is recorded of her. She gave birth to three daughters, Constance, Juana, and Maria, whom she left successive heiresses of her right to the crown of Navarre.

On the death of Maria, the King, baffled in his attempt to secure the succession to his daughter, and his desire for male heirs being stimulated by his hatred to his brother James, immediately sent ambassadors to Alfonso and Beatrix, the sovereigns of Portugal, soliciting the hand of their daughter Leonora. The King of Castile, who had designed this Princess for his nephew, Fernando, vainly sought to prevent her being given to the King of

Aragon; but the superior rank of the latter caused him to be chosen in preference to his half-brother, and, notwithstanding some slight altercations as to the amount of dower to be given to the bride, the marriage was concluded this same year. The nuptials were celebrated at Barcelona with little pomp and not under the happiest auspices, the King being engaged in broils with the Union, the head of which, the Infante James, expired on the day of the arrival of the bride, after a sudden and violent sickness, the singular nature of which, and its fatal termination, induced strong suspicions of his having been poisoned by his brother, the King. This, the second Queen of Don Pedro, was tall and graceful in person, of beautiful features and amiable manners, but she survived her marriage but a few short months, dying of the plague that desolated Europe in 1368.*

During the short reign of this Queen, the civil war reached its climax. An incident occurred during her stay at Valencia, which to the proud spirit of the Portuguese Princess, must have been exceedingly disagreeable. The King, having set out for Teruel, was compelled, by the insurgents, to alter his course and proceed to Valencia, the very focus of the insurrection. The King's entrance into that town was hailed with rapturous acclamations, and made the occasion of great rejoicings by its inhabitants, the partisans of the Union being delighted with having the King in their power, and determined to retain him until he should have fulfilled the hard conditions extorted from him by the league. Yet the real subjection in which he was held was covered by a great show of

* In the history of Don Pedro, written by himself, it is stated that three hundred persons, on the average, died daily of the plague, in Aragon, during October of the year 1348.

veneration and respect for his majesty's person. The Queen, making her entrance some days after, was welcomed with greater parade than had been made for any of her predecessors on the throne. It happened that, one evening during the festivities, one of the numerous bands of dancers that thronged the streets having found their way up to the royal apartments, in their enthusiasm and delight, insisted on the King and Queen joining the dance, and matters had reached so dangerous a crisis, that the sovereigns deemed it advisable to gratify the riotous mob by complying with this insolent request.

The insult must have been intolerable to the haughty and punctilious spirit of a Portuguese bride, but the King who was an adept in the art of dissembling showed no outward signs of the rage that filled his heart, and which he subsequently vented on the heads of the chief offenders.* Had his conscience been susceptible of remorse, he would have felt this mortification a just retribution for the heartlessness with which he had celebrated with similar festivities, in Perpignan, the downfall of his hapless brother-in-law, the King of Mallorca. Leonora died in Exerica, October, 1348.

Leonora, daughter of Pedro, and Isabel, reigning sovereigns of Sicily, became, in 1349, the third wife of Don Pedro, and more fortunate than her predecessors, gratified his anxious desire of a son by giving birth, on the 27th of December, 1351, to a Prince who was

* Having subsequently forcibly entered Valencia at the head of an army, Don Pedro wreaked his vengeance on the chief rebels, and was with difficulty dissuaded from levelling the city with the ground, and sowing its site with salt, so deeply had the insults there offered to him rankled in his heart. The persuasions of his nobles at length prevailed, and he consented to spare this beautiful city.

christened Juan Manuel, and succeeded his father on the throne. Leonora subsequently gave birth to another son, Martin, who succeeded his eldest brother. During the reign of this Queen, the conquest of Mallorca was finally accomplished, the dethroned King perishing on the 25th of October, 1349, in the last battle he adventured for the recovery of his dominions from his grasping relative. The head of the ill-starred monarch was severed from the body, and his son, who was wounded in the engagement, taken prisoner and conveyed to Barcelona, where he was kept for some time. Leonora died in 1374.

Of this Queen no particular trait of goodness is recorded, and her memory is stained by the malignity with which, in 1364, she persecuted her husband's wisest counsellor, and tried and oldest friend, Don Bernardo de Cabrera. Having united with the enemies of this consummate politician and experienced pilot, who through every storm had skilfully guided the battered bark of his sovereign's fortunes, and in every crisis of his fate had proved his guardian angel, Leonora ruthlessly pursued the veteran, who, by some contradiction or opposition to her will, had incurred her animosity. Without proofs, on the most puerile accusations, she gave orders to her son the Prince of Girona, to cause Don Bernardo to be beheaded, previously putting him to the torture.

The Prince, without the slightest hesitation or feeling of commiseration for the venerable statesman who had protected his father's youthful inexperience, and been his own tutor from his earliest years, caused the inhuman mandate to be executed, without allowing even the mockery of a trial to this, one of Spain's wealthiest and most influential nobles. Of Don Bernardo, it may be said, that he did many good deeds without the co-opera-

tion of the King, while the latter never did anything worthy of note without the advice and participation of this great noble. The grandson of Don Bernardo was, eight years after, reinstated in the confiscated estates and honours of his family, the King making the tardy acknowledgment that, through his evil advisers, he had been too hasty and severe towards his illustrious ancestor.

Don Pedro, in his old age, received an embassy from Joana I., Queen of Naples, who, tormented by her own subjects, and desirous of securing the protection of so powerful a monarch, offered, if either that sovereign or his son would marry her, to annex her dominions to those of the crown of Aragon. But this donation would have entailed too many disputes, and the lady, already the widow of three husbands, was no longer of an age to please a sovereign who, though himself advanced in life, still retained the passions of youth. Another reason concurred to induce Don Pedro to look with indifference on the addition of another crown—his heart was already prepossessed in favour of Doña Sibila Forcia, the charming daughter of a private gentleman of Ampurdau, and the widow of Don Artal de Foges. The coronation of this Queen was performed with unwonted pomp, in Saragossa, in 1381.

The King, who seems to have strangely forgotten the bitter experience of his early youth, allowed his young wife the same injudicious authority, that, vested in his own mother-in-law's hands, had, during his father's reign, proved so injurious to the state, and hateful to himself. Nor did Doña Sibila fail to follow the example of Leonora of Castile, and her conduct towards the offspring of her predecessors was impolitic in the highest degree. Don Juan, the Crown Prince, had formed an attachment for

Doña Violante, daughter of Robert, Duke of Bar, and of Maria, Princess of the blood royal of France, and opposed his father's wishes that he should marry Maria, the young Queen of Sicily.

This refusal on the part of the Prince led to great disunion between the father and son, the Queen doing her utmost to render the breach still wider. Juan retired from Court to the estates of the Count of Ampurias, who had married his sister; and then, without obtaining the King's previous sanction, was privately married to the lady of his love, in presence of his own brother, Don Martin, his sister, Doña Juana, Countess of Ampurias, and the Count, her husband, the latter volunteering to expose himself to every loss for the sake of obliging the Prince. This act of friendship had well nigh cost the Count dear, as the old King, enraged at his having encouraged Don Juan in his disobedience, furiously invaded the Count's dominions. As for the Prince, whom his father threatened to disinherit, and had deprived of all his privileges, he appealed against the King himself to the Justicia of Aragon,* and that magistrate, using the authority delegated to him by the laws of the realm, gave sentence against the monarch, and decreed that the Prince should be reinstated in his offices. Juan, however, was too well acquainted with his father's temper to trust himself in his power, and lived retired.

Don Pedro, who could not even in old age exist in peace, having now neither foreign nor domestic foes with whom to quarrel, attacked the Church, and commenced a

* Justice.—This magistrate, whose authority was supreme, was empowered by the constitution of Aragon to restrain the authority of the King himself, when it exceeded the limits of the law, and in all doubtful cases, an appeal to his tribunal was decisive.

litigation with the Archbishop of Tarragona, who resisted the monarch's attempts to seize on the government and sovereignty of that city, which had hitherto been under the dominion of the Archbishops of the See. Don Pedro, having sent troops to enforce his pretensions, the prelate is said to have sent him a message, summoning him to appear, within sixty days, at the tribunal of God, to answer for this aggression. Tradition furthermore adds that Saint Thecla, patroness of the church of Tarragona, appeared to the monarch, reproached him with his impiety, and struck him a blow on the face, from which hour the King sickened of the disease that proved fatal to him on the 5th of January, 1387. This story does not seem amiss in the pages of Zurita and other old writers, but in those of a writer of the eighteenth century, where we find it gravely related, it causes some little surprise.

Don Pedro was of small stature, and spare form. His fiery, indomitable spirits, firm and decided temper, patience, and perseverance, ensured him success in almost all his enterprises. His fondness for literary pursuits, and especially for the sciences of astronomy and alchymy, was excessive; and he was equally distinguished by the attention he bestowed on the civil and military cares of government, and the affability he manifested to the lower orders. Unfortunately Pedro's good qualities were counterbalanced by an innate cruelty, an inordinate and grasping ambition, and an insatiable thirst for vengeance, vices that age rathered increased than tempered. If years have no effect in softening a man's temper, they will have the contrary one of aggravating it; so that, if, evil disposed in his youth, he grows neither wiser nor better as he advances in life, he will be a very fiend in his old age. The singular passion for ceremony of this King, caused him to

be surnamed the 'Ceremonious.' He pushed this mania so far, that he caused his envoys at the different Courts of Europe to send him minute accounts of the ceremonies and etiquette used in each, and from these materials, compiled a book containing the essence or rather the quintessence of etiquette, ordering this manual to serve as a standard to his own Court. His reign, which lasted fifty-one years within nineteen days, was one of the most stormy on record, being constantly distracted with domestic broils or foreign wars.

Some time previous to the King's death, Prince Juan was taken ill, and the disease proved of so singular and alarming a nature, as to baffle the efforts of the doctors to ascertain the cause or find a cure for it. Strong suspicions attached to the Queen and her brother Don Bernardo de Forcia, who were accused of employing magic to acquire the extraordinary influence they possessed over the King, and cause the lingering illness and probable death of the Prince. Following the example of his father, Don Pedro feeling that he had but a few hours to live, advised his wife to fly from the effects of her step-son's angry revenge, and, like Leonora, Sibila abandoned her dying husband's bed-side, and took to flight. Less fortunate than the Castilian Princess, the Queen of Aragon had no powerful brother on the throne to assume her defence, and protect her rights, and it being apparent that the King was past recovery, the adherents of Prince John ordered the Queen to be pursued and brought back. The unfortunate Sibila was thrown into prison, together with her brother and several of her followers. The Prince, though apprized of his father's danger, and subsequently of his death, was himself in too precarious a state to allow of his being moved.

Pedro had no sooner expired, than his now friendless widow was proceeded against, as having attempted, by sorcery, the life of her step-son; and without regard for her rank, or compassion for her sex and forlorn situation, was even put to the torture, together with Bernaldo and many of his partisans. Whether they were thus induced to confess themselves guilty, is not known, but all, with the exception of Sibila, her brother, and the Count of Palas, were beheaded. A counsellor was offered to the Queen Dowager to defend her cause, but she replying that she would have none, but would leave it to the mercy and justice of the King, the latter, at the request of the Pope's Legate, granted her a free pardon, and an annuity of 25,000 sueldos.* The only child of Sibila, was a daughter, Isabel, who married James, Count of Urgel. Sibila de Forcia died during the reign of her step-son, Don Martin, in 1407.

## DOÑA VIOLANTE.

### REIGN OF DON JUAN I.

Don Juan, being too feeble to take upon him the cares of government, empowered his brother, Don Martin, to act for him, particularly in the case of the captive Queen-Dowager, whose estates were seized and given by the new sovereign to his consort on the very day of his father's death. Don Juan had, during his father's life, been con-

* Other authorities assert that the Queen was imprisoned for life, and that all the possessions which had been alienated in her favour were re-annexed to the crown.—Ed.

tracted in 1370, to Juana of France, aunt of Charles V., and sister of his father, King John; but this Princess dying in Beziers, on her way to Aragon, the Prince, as already related, married, in 1384, Violante, daughter of the Duke of Bar. Juan, though he partially recovered from his illness, never regained his former health and activity; and his physical debility, probably inducing weakness of the mental faculties, he seemed to take no interest in the cares of state, but left the government almost entirely to the Queen, whom he loved passionately. The want of energy of the sovereign was not, however, productive of the ill effects that might have been expected, the peace of his kingdom being, doubtless, attributable to the fact that the neighbouring states were at the time too much engaged in their own civil and foreign feuds to take advantage of his inactivity and indolence.

The Queen, who possessed the joyous temper that characterizes her nation, attracted to the Court of Aragon the wandering troubadours of Provence; and the King himself was so great an admirer of *La Gaie Science,* that he instituted schools in which it was taught, and even sent an embassy to the King of France, requesting he would send him experienced teachers of the art of rhyming. The royal palace became the scene of continual festivities, in which poetry, music, and dancing entirely superseded the grand and stately formalities of the preceding reign. The extravagant profusion of the court at length attained such a pitch as warranted the interference of the nobles,*

* Although himself a poet, and imbued with a strong taste for literature, Don Juan did not, nevertheless, despise the less elevated amusement afforded by the presence of hired strollers and buffoons, by whom the

who, in the Cortes held in Monzon, demanded a reform in the palace, and the exile of Doña Carroza de Villaragut, an especial favourite with both the King and Queen, whose excessive power and insolence had given great umbrage.* The deputies from Catalonia and Mallorca were the most clamorous, and many lords and gentlemen assembled before the doors, with troops of armed followers to back their demands, the King having refused, with threats, to allow of the accusation being read. The favourite having won many partisans, and the hope of ingratiating themselves with the sovereigns drawing others to her side, a challenge was sent by her party to the armed complainants, and the defiance being eagerly accepted, the parliamentary discussion was on the point of becoming a civil war.

Matters, however, came to a more peaceful conclusion than might have been anticipated from the opening scenes. The King, alarmed at the angry and determined aspect of his chief Barons, ordered an inquiry to be made as to the foundations for the complaints, and having been convinced they were just, ordered the obnoxious lady to leave the palace immediately, and to abstain in future from all intercourse with the members of the royal family, depriving her also of all her offices and privileges.

Doña Violante gave birth to two sons, James and Fer-

tone of the Court was greatly lowered, and the dignity of its members lessened; a fact of which the proud nobles were so conscious, that they eagerly awaited the opportunity of evincing their disgust—Ed.

* This lady, whose favour with her royal mistress had probably led her to presume too much upon her good fortune, was principally obnoxious to the Aragonese aristocracy, from the fact of her being an accomplished poet and musician, gifts so rare at that period in her sex, that they excited the indignation of the less favoured individuals by whom she was surrounded, and who accordingly denounced them in her person as Mahometan abominations, which they were unwilling to tolerate.—Ed.

nando, who both died in childhood, and to one daughter, Violante, who married Louis, Duke of Anjou and King of Naples.

Don Juan had, when Prince of Aragon, been married to Martha de Armagnac, and by this lady, who died shortly after her marriage, he had a daughter, Doña Juana, who married Mathew, Count of Foix, and subsequently laid claim to the crown of Aragon. The only pastime requiring exertion, to which Juan was addicted, was that of the chase; and his death, which was sudden, took place on the 19th of May, 1395, while enjoying that pleasure on his way to Barcelona. The King was eagerly pursuing the prey when he fell from his horse, and when raised by his attendants, life was found to be extinct. John was forty-four years of age, and had reigned eight years.*

Violante was extremely unwilling to surrender her regal honours which, at the death of her husband, belonged to the wife of his successor, Don Martin, and with a view to prolonging their enjoyment, asserted that she was *enciente*. The council decided that four matrons chosen from among the noblest ladies of the Court should remain in attendance on the Queen day and night until her confinement, as the birth of a posthumous child, had

* Four years before his death, the King had, by a papal dispensation, effected the union of his nephew, Don Martin the Younger, with his relative, Maria, Queen of Sicily, daughter and heiress of Frederick II.; and the marriage was no sooner accomplished, than he dispatched the newly-wedded pair to the bride's dominions, under the guardianship of his brother and successor, with strict injunctions that they were to be governed in all things by his counsel and advice. He then bequeathed his own kingdom to the elder Don Martin, to the exclusion of his two daughters, a nomination which met with the immediate concurrence of the Cortes.—Ed.

it proved a son, would have materially altered the state of affairs. Violante submitted with a good grace to the strict surveillance which she had no means of evading, but on condition that she should in the meanwhile continue to reside in the royal palace, and be treated as the reigning Queen. This request was complied with, and Doña Maria de Luna,* who, as wife of Don Martin, had been proclaimed Queen, and taken up her abode in the palace, was lodged elsewhere. The deception could not, however, be long continued, and Violante was compelled to cede the post she had vainly attempted to retain.

After the accession of Martin and Maria, we find little mention of Violante, until the interregnum that followed the death of that King, when Violante again appears, exerting herself to procure the election of her grandson, Luis, Duke of Calabria, to the vacant throne of Aragon. In behalf of this Prince, Violante sent ambassadors to lay his claim before the assembled electors. Not content with this, Violante came in person to urge the Cortes in his favour, and the King of France, her cousin, gave her troops under the command of Godfrey of Busicanda. But all her efforts proved in vain, the electors deciding in favour of Ferdinand of Castile. No record exists of the subsequent life, or of the date of the death of Violante.

* Sister to the Antipope, Pedro de Luna, otherwise Benedict XIII.—Ed.

## DOÑA MARIA DE LUNA.

### 395.

## DOÑA MARGARITA DE PRADES.

REIGN OF DON MARTIN.

THE indolent and sickly Juan was succeeded by his brave and energetic brother, Don Martin, then thirty-two years of age. The new King was, at the time of his brother's death, in Sicily, whither he had gone to quell the rebellion, and establish on the throne its rightful heiress, who had married his son. In the absence of Martin, his wife, Maria de Luna, was proclaimed Queen, and took upon her the government of the kingdom. Messengers were immediately dispatched to the new sovereign, urging the necessity of his prompt return, as the Conde de Foix, who had married the eldest daughter of the late King, was preparing to assert by arms his wife's right to the crown of Aragon. The Queen, in the meanwhile, displayed a prudence and capacity that proved her fully capable of discharging the important duties that devolved on her. Even during the preceding reign, Maria had shown herself possessed of no little energy and decision, by levying troops to send to her husband's assistance in Sicily; and now, by the vigorous measures she suggested, she so effectually repelled the invasion of the Count of Foix, that he was finally driven from the kingdom he had thus forcibly sought to win.

Two years after the death of his brother, Martin was enabled to leave Sicily and return to Aragon, when he

was solemnly crowned,* in the April of 1399. The coronation of the Queen took place a few days after that of the King. Among the ladies who attended on the occasion, were Violante, the exiled Queen of Naples; the Infanta Isabel, sister-in-law of Maria; the Countess of Luna and her mother; and Doña Margarita de Prades, a Princess of the blood royal, who was destined to succeed the present Queen on the throne. A powerful fleet having been sent out to Sicily, the rebellion was at length quelled. About this time, a body of some 15,000 fanatics, calling themselves the *White Penitents*, made their appearance in Sicily. The sovereigns of Aragon and Sicily, anticipating the evils that might accrue from the presence of so numerous a band in an unsettled country, took vigorous measures for the immediate dispersion of the actors of this religious farce, which were finally successful.

Peace and tranquillity had scarcely been restored in the lovely isle from which, for more than a century, and during the reigns of seven Kings of Aragon, they had been banished, when the members of the royal family occupying the thrones of both countries, as though doomed by the angry fiat of an offended Deity, one by one, in quick succession, dropped into a premature grave. The only son of the reigning sovereign of Sicily, the grandson and heir of the King of Aragon, died in Catania, in the spring of the year 1401. Authors do not agree as to the name and age of this Prince. The Aragonians, who call him Pedro, say he was but a few months old, and assert that he died a natural death. The Sicilians call him Fadrique, say he was seven years of age, and ascribe his

* At Saragossa.—Ed.

death to his having, while learning the use of arms in the presence of his delighted parents, by some untoward accident, fallen on the point of a sword, which, entering his body up to the hilt, occasioned his death.

Whether the Sicilians were right in their conjectures that the Queen sickened and died from excess of grief at the loss of her son, or whether her death proceeded from some other cause, it is certain she survived him but a short time, expiring on the 27th of May of the same year. It was deemed advisable that the King should contract a second marriage, as by his first he had no son left to inherit after his death the crowns of Aragon and Sicily, and from among the number of Princesses proposed to him, he chose Blanche, daughter of Charles III., surnamed the Noble, King of Navarre, and the nuptials were celebrated in 1402.

In December of 1406, the Queen of Aragon died, greatly regretted by the whole nation. Daughter and heiress of the famous Don Lope de Luna, by his second wife, Brianda de Agaout, Doña Maria had come into possession of her father's vast domains on the express condition that one of her descendants should inherit them, and bear the title and coat-of-arms of the Counts of Luna. The death of this Queen, whose piety, strong intellect, prudence and charity, are greatly extolled by all the Spanish historians, was followed by that of her only surviving son, Martin, King of Sicily, who died in 1409, aged thirty-four years. Doña Maria had also given birth to a daughter, Margaretta, and to two sons, James and John, but these children died in infancy. The rivalry of the numerous candidates for the succession to his crown, even during his life, so disgusted the widowed King of Aragon, that he endeavoured, by a second marriage, to disappoint

them all. Doña Margarita de Prades, a Princess of the royal house of Aragon, and daughter of the Count of Prades,* was the lady chosen, but Martin's hopes of a son were disappointed, and he died, leaving no issue, in 1410. Nothing more is known of Doña Margarita.

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## DOÑA LEONORA DE ALBURQUERQUE.

### 1412.

REIGN OF DON FERNANDO I.

THE death of Martin was followed by an interregnum of two years, during which the numerous pretenders to the crown strenuously urged their several claims, not forgetting to use the forcible argument of arms in support of their pretensions. As usual in such cases, the powerful nobles of Aragon were divided into factions, each supported the party that most favoured its interests, and great disturbances ensued. Finally the States having named a novel tribunal, consisting of nine doctors learned in the law, the disputed crown was awarded to Don Fernando, of Castile, uncle to Juan, the reigning sovereign of that country, and son of the Infanta Leonora of Aragon, sister of the late Don Martin.

At the period of his accession to the throne, Fernando was thirty-four years of age, and had been some time married to Doña Leonora,† or Urraca, Countess of Albur-

* One of the most beautiful women of her time.—ED.

† Urraca was originally the name of the Queen of Ferdinand I., but it was afterwards changed to Leonora.

querque and Montalvan, and lady of the five townships of the Infantazgo of Castile, so wealthy an heiress, that she was surnamed *La rica hembra,* (the rich maiden.)* By this lady, Ferdinand had six sons, Alfonso, Juan and Ferdinand, who all successively ascended the throne, Enrique, Grand Master of Santiago, Pedro and Sanchos; and two daughters, Maria, who became Queen of Castile, and Leonor, who became Queen of Portugal. The crown which his father, Don Juan, had used at his coronation as King of Castile, was sent to Ferdinand by his mother, to be used at his own coronation as King of Aragon; and this little incident was subsequently thought by many to have presaged the union of the two kingdoms that took place under his grandson, Ferdinand, the second of that name in Aragon, and the fifth in Castile.

The commencement of the reign of Ferdinand was disturbed by the restless, ambitious spirit of the Count of Urgel, who had been one of the competitors for the crown, and who, prompted by his mother, attempted to dispute it still with the newly-elected sovereign. James, Count of Urgel, had married Isabel, daughter of Pedro IV., and half-sister of that monarch's sons and successors, Juan and Martin; but as his claim to the crown was in his wife's name, it was set aside, females being excluded,

* Doña Leonora was not only a wealthy heiress, but was, moreover, as beautiful in person as she was graceful and attractive in manner. Her hand had, consequently, been eagerly sought alike by many of the native grandees and by several foreign Princes. She, however, rejected every overture that was made to her, alleging her betrothal, at the age of eighteen, to Don Ferdinand, who was ten years her junior; on which occasion, it was nevertheless stipulated, that should King Henry, the elder brother of the Prince, die before he attained his fourteenth year, the latter should be free to espouse Catherine of Lancaster, and Doña Leonora herself at liberty to form an alliance elsewhere.—Ed.

if not by law, by the stubborn opposition of the nation. He would probably have submitted to the decision of the judges who pronounced in favour of the Infanta of Castile, had not his mother, the Countess Margarita, a woman of a proud spirit and unbounded ambition, incited him to persevere in his claim and endeavour to obtain by force of arms that which was denied him.

Ferdinand, in order to ensure the undisturbed possession of his newly-acquired honours, endeavoured to conciliate the Count by proposing that his second son should marry the eldest daughter of the latter; no great concession on the King's part, if we consider that the little lady was the heiress of her father's vast domains, and, being descended on both sides from the royal house of Aragon, might have been thought a suitable match for any sovereign. But, however inclined the Count might be to listen to the King's advances, the Dowager Countess would hear of no proposals that tended to make her son relinquish his claim, and incessantly urged him to reject all overtures from his successful rival.

"My son, the crown or nothing!" she daily repeated, reminding him of the valour and perseverance of his ancestor, the Infante James, who had so stoutly resisted the efforts of his brother, Pedro IV., to deprive him of the succession, and how the majority of the nobles and the body of the people had espoused his cause—Pedro being only able to get rid of his pretensions by taking his life. She represented the shame that would fall on him should he accept the terms offered. With consummate art, she urged that Ferdinand had exhausted his treasures and the goodwill of his supporters in the acquisition of the crown, both of which resources would be found wanting should the struggle be renewed—that the nation resented his

having entered the kingdom at the head of armed troops, rather as a conqueror than a chosen sovereign—that the Aragonese were also greatly angered by the preference given in all appointments to the Castilian adherents of Ferdinand.

She listened with haughty impatience to the messages of the King, rejected his offered conditions with scorn, and vowed that her grandchildren, the Conde's three little daughters, should never do homage to Urraca, Countess of Alburquerque, as she insolently designated the Queen. Nor was the wife of the Conde less urgent, and the Conde being goaded on, moreover, by his own ambition, raised the standard of revolt. The result of this mad enterprise proved most unfortunate, the Conde being finally defeated, taken and condemned to perpetual imprisonment, while his aspiring mother was deprived of her estates and subsequently of her liberty.

Ferdinand died, aged thirty-seven years, on the 2nd of April, 1416, in the village of Igualada, six leagues from Barcelona. The enemies of this King accuse him of having, while Regent of Castile, appropriated the revenues of his nephew John to the furtherance of his claims on Aragon; they also reproach him with seeking to marry his own son, the Infante Juan, a youth of eighteen, to the Queen of Naples, though that sovereign was upwards of forty, and of no very fair repute, while the Infante was already betrothed to the Infanta of Navarre.

Accustomed to wield the sceptre in Castile, during the minority of the Infante Juan, Ferdinand could ill brook the arrogance of his new subjects, the Aragonese and Catalans, who accustomed to curb the authority and control the will of their monarchs, little relished the despotic sway of Ferdinand. The prudence, equity and

disinterestedness of Ferdinand's administration while Regent in Castile, triumphantly refute the accusation of his foes, and the peace which he maintained during that minority is almost unprecedented in history. The alliance with Naples was also judicious in a political sense; and his son Enrique, Grand Master of Santiago, whom he proposed as a husband for the Princess of Navarre, was richly endowed with Castilian domains. That Ferdinand was possessed of many great and noble qualities, and that his character was stained by no vice is undeniable, and his premature death was certainly a misfortune to the nation.*

* Fernando, in the will which he made the year preceding that of his death, left his jewels, gold and silver plate, the towns of Magorga, Paredes and Villa de Tormes, 18,000 doblas *de oro de juro de heredad*, and 10,000 gold florins of the Behetrias, that he possessed in Castile, and all the income that came to him from his Castilian domains, for the payment of his debts. In case the marriage projected between his second son Juan and the Queen of Naples should not take place, he expressed a wish that Juan should marry Isabel, daughter of the King of Navarre and of his aunt Leonora; and again, should this union not be carried into effect, his third son Enrique was to marry the Princess; in case none of these marriages took place, the 10,000 florins Ferdinand had already received from the King of Navarre, as his daughter's dower, were to be returned to that sovereign, for the payment of which sum, Ferdinand expressly designated his town of Paredes de Nava. The domains the King and Queen possessed in Castile were distributed as follows:—to Juan, the Lordship of Lara, the town of Medina del Campo and adjacent villages, the Duchy of Peñafiel and Condado of Mayorga, the towns of Cuellar Castroxeriz, Olmedo, Villalon; and in Rioja—Haro, Bilhorado, Briones and Cerezo; in Cataluña, the town of Montblanc, with the title of Duke. To the Infante, Don Enrique, the Condado of Alburquerque, Salvatierra, Miranda, Montemayor, Granada and Caliostro, then called the *Five Towns*.—To Sancho, the towns of Montaloza, de la Puebla, and Mondejar. To Pedro, the towns of Terraçan, Villagrasse, and Tarrajo in Cataluña, and Elche and Crevillen in Castile. To the Infantas Maria and Leonor, 50,000 *libras Barcelonesas* each.

From the period of her husband's death, the incidents of the life of Leonora become so blended with those of the reign of Don Juan, King of Castile, that the reader is referred for further particulars to the annals of Maria, consort of that sovereign, and daughter of Leonor. Hitherto the auspicious fates had left no wish of the favoured Leonora ungratified. The honoured consort of the monarch who had been the choice of the nation, mother of five gallant youths, the flower of the royal blood of Castile, and of two fair daughters, whose alliance was eagerly sought by the Princes of Europe, Queen of Aragon, and all but Queen in Castile, where her immense possessions gave her unbounded influence, Leonora seemed placed beyond the reach of malice and secured against the caprices of fortune. With the reign of Ferdinand, however, ended her prosperity, and his death was the first of the long series of vicissitudes that chequered the remainder of her existence.

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## MARIA DE CASTILE.

### 1416.

REIGN OF DON ALFONSO (THE MAGNANIMOUS).

DON ALFONSO, the eldest son of Ferdinand I., was contracted during his father's reign to Joanna, Queen of Naples, but ere the Prince arrived to claim his bride, her inconstant humour had chosen another bridegroom; and Jacques of Bourbon, Count de la Marche, one certainly better suited in point of years, had obtained the preference.

The sequel proved that the Prince had been fortunate in losing a bride who, besides being his senior by twenty-two years, became as celebrated for her ill conduct as for her misfortunes. The Prince, on his return to Spain, married his cousin, the Infanta Doña Maria, daughter of Henry III., King of Castile, and of his Queen, Doña Catalina. The nuptials were celebrated on the 12th of June, 1415, the bride's dower consisting of 200,000 *doblas Castellanas,* besides valuable jewels. This marriage was productive of no happiness to the wedded pair, inconstancy on one side and vindictive rage on the other, causing a breach, that time was powerless to heal.

Alfonso having succeeded his father in 1416, a plot was formed in favour of the Count of Urgel, which, however, was almost immediately discovered, and it was upon this occasion that the King obtained his surname of the Magnanimous, by his refusal to learn the names of the conspirators, thus putting it out of his power to proceed against them. Having, in 1419, undertaken in person the pacification of Sardinia, Alfonso named his Queen to the regency during his absence, which after the accomplishment of the object of the expedition was prolonged by the following circumstances. Doña Juana, the Queen of Naples, surrounded by enemies and kept a prisoner in Naples by her nephew, the Duke of Anjou, solicited the aid of her former suitor, offering, as a return for the assistance he might render her, to adopt him solemnly as her heir.*

* Doña Juana II., Queen of Naples, was the sister of the late King Ladislaus, and daughter of Charles III., King of Naples and Hungary. She had been originally married to the Duke of Austria, but before her accession to the throne, she had become a widow, and had, for the second time, bestowed her hand upon James of Bourbon, who became so much disgusted by the licentiousness of her conduct, that he not only separated

After spending some time in that kingdom, and experiencing every vicissitude of good and ill fortune in his continued warfare with the Duke of Anjou, Sforza, the Duke of Milan, and the fickle Queen herself, the occurrences in Castile demanding Alfonso's speedy return to Spain, and his interference in behalf of his brothers, he set out for his own dominions in October of 1423. Having on his way besieged and taken Marseilles, the richest of the Duke of Anjou's possessions, Alfonso here again proved himself worthy his surname. The city having been taken by assault, the principal ladies sought refuge in the churches, and the King, to whom it was reported, ordered the noblest of his gentlemen to mount guard at

himself from her, but even caused her to be made a prisoner in her own palace—a severity which was fated to be productive of ruin to himself, the Neapolitans resenting at once his rigour towards their natural sovereign, and the influx of French courtiers to their capital, by whom all the offices of state were engrossed. A strong party was consequently formed in favour of the Queen; her vices were forgotten or overlooked; and having effected her escape from the palace, on the pretext of requiring change of air, she found herself, on her arrival at one of her country-seats, surrounded by a zealous crowd of partisans; and placing herself at their head, she marched at once upon the Castel del Ovo, in which her husband had taken up his temporary residence; and having with little difficulty forced her way to his presence, compelled him to renounce the kingly title which he derived from his union with herself, and to dismiss all his French followers, with the exception of forty, whom he was permitted to retain. This advantage gained, she so ruthlessly pursued him with her hate, that he was ultimately obliged to retire from her dominions, and to seek a refuge in his own country; where, wearied and disgusted, he at length assumed the habit of St. Francis, and after a few years spent in the monotony of the cloister, terminated his existence at Besançon.

At the period of Queen Juana's appeal to the Aragonese monarch, she had attained her fortieth year, and her kingdom was threatened by Louis III. of Anjou, who, supported in his claim by Martin V., had already marched from Paris to invade it.—Ed.

the doors and protect them from insult, while he himself went through the town, putting a stop to the pillage and assisting in extinguishing the fires that had broken out in several quarters of the town. The dames of Marseilles in gratitude sent their jewels to the gallant foe, but the King returned them instantly to the donors.

The disputes of the Infantes of Aragon with the King of Castile* had now arrived at such a height that their brother, the King of Aragon, could no longer delay taking an active part in the debates, being moreover urged by the prayers of his cousin Catalina, sister of his own Queen, and wife of his brother Enrique, who had now been imprisoned above two years by the King of Castile. Finding his pacific remonstrances of no avail, Alfonso advanced to the frontiers of Castile, at the head of a large body of troops; but Maria dreading a hostile meeting between those so closely allied to her, interfered to prevent it, and finally adjusted the difficulty, the Infante Enrique being reinstated in his honours and possessions.

The peace was, however, but a truce. The King of Castile, a weak-minded monarch, alike incapable of love or hatred, was governed entirely by his favourite, the Condestable, Don Alfonso de Luna, between whom and the Infantes of Aragon there existed that deep hatred so frequently resulting from clashing interests; and both parties being equally intent on governing alike King and kingdom, the strife was renewed with increased animosity. Alfonso, in the support of his brother's interests, involved his subjects in the expenses incidental to war, which, in the present case, being productive of no ultimate benefit to the nation, were doubly galling.

* *Vide* "Annals of Maria of Castile, wife of Juan II."

After wasting the resources of his dominions in this family quarrel, Alfonso was compelled to return to Naples and secure his inheritance there, but the fickle nature of Joanna proved a fertile source of vexation and annoyance, and the unavoidable warfare finally ended with the capture and imprisonment, by the Genoese, of Alfonso, his brother Juan, King of Navarre,* and Don Enrique. Meanwhile Maria, who had again been left Regent in Aragon, had obtained a truce of her brother, the King of Castile, who, notwithstanding the weakness of his intellect, was too good a knight to persist in waging war when his opponents were two ladies, and of those ladies, the one his sister and the other his cousin.† The Queen of Aragon having had a conference with her brother, for the purpose of obtaining this truce, was treated by him with the utmost affection: and these natural tokens of brotherly love were subsequently interpreted greatly to the Queen's disadvantage, the petty jealousy of the King inclining him to suspect her of favouring her brother's party more than his own.

In 1429, the interference of Maria again prevented the effusion of blood. The Castilian and Aragonian armies being about to engage, Maria hastened to the spot, caused her tent to be pitched between the hostile troops, and passing from one to the other, so wrought upon the better feelings of her husband and brother, that a peace was again patched up between them. In this same year, Don Francisco de Arguello, Archbishop of Saragossa, being

* Don Juan having married the Infanta of Navarre, on the death of his father-in-law, Carlos, in 1421, had succeeded to the throne of Navarre. *Vide* "Life of Blanche of Navarre."

† Blanche, who was left Regent of Navarre in her husband's absence, was daughter of Leonora, aunt of Juan.

convicted of holding a traitorous correspondence with the Condestable of Castile, was thrown into prison, and there privately strangled. Though his punishment was generally known, it excited neither resentment nor surprise, as it was thought to have been deservedly incurred, but the true motives of this summary execution are otherwise reported by some writers.

It is said, that one day as he was walking with the Queen, to whom etiquette demanded that he should offer his arm, the prelate, forgetting the respect due to her, had the insolence to use improper language to his sovereign; Maria, whose honour is unimpeached, forbore to notice his words, and even affected not to have heard them, but they were noted by others and reported to the King. That night Arguello was seized, strangled, and thrown into the Ebro. Though Maria had qualities that won her the esteem and veneration of her subjects, her domestic life was most unhappy. The passion of Alfonso for Doña Margarita de Ijar, one of the Queen's ladies, had caused much disquiet for some time to Maria, and the truth of her suspicions having become but too manifest, in a fit of jealous frenzy she ordered her hapless rival to be strangled. The King, who was at the time engaged in hunting, was so enraged when told of the fate of his mistress and her unborn babe, that he took a solemn oath he would never again live with the Queen, and this oath he never once broke during the course of his long reign. The Queen being childless, the most binding of all ties was wanting between the estranged pair; and though the unhappy Maria loved her faithless lord to the last day of her life with undiminished affection, the pitiless revenge she had consummated was never forgiven, and the indifference of

Alfonso waxing from that day into absolute hatred, he lost no opportunity of mortifying and vexing her.

In 1435, he took from her the regency of Aragon and Valencia, leaving her that of Cataluña alone, and even in that she was associated with her brother-in-law, the King of Navarre, to whom he also gave the government of the provinces taken from the sway of Maria. The Queen, deeply wounded by this undeserved insult, in the speech she delivered on taking leave of the Cortes, openly testified her resentment, saying: "Henceforward the regency of the kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia will be filled by another," thus carefully abstaining from mentioning her brother-in-law, between whom and herself there was now that enmity that is the infallible result of rivalry in power. Maria never was reconciled to her husband, who spent the greater part of his life warring in Italy, and who during the latter part of it became so much attached to one of his mistresses, Lucretia de Alaño, that he endeavoured to get divorced from his Queen, that he might give this lady the place on the throne which she occupied in his heart: but this design was frustrated by the firmness of his enemy, Pope Calixto, who constantly refused to accord his consent. Don Alfonso died in 1458, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the forty-third of his reign. His animosity survived him, for he omitted all mention of Maria in his will.

Doña Maria died in the same year, in the city of Valencia, having lived estranged from her husband twenty-six years, and never having even seen him after his second expedition to Naples, in 1432.

# DOÑA JUANA HENRIQUEZ.

## (QUEEN OF ARAGON.)

## 1458.

REIGN OF JUAN II.

DURING the protracted absence of Alfonso V., in his kingdom of Naples, his hereditary dominions were governed by his brother Juan, who, by the death of his father-in-law, Charles III., the Noble, had become King of Navarre. Blanche of Navarre,* the first wife of Juan, dying in 1442, he contracted, in 1447, a second marriage with Juana Henriquez, daughter of Don Frederico Henriquez, High Admiral of Castile. This lady, who was of the blood royal of Castile, though much younger than her husband, possessed an equal share of energy and resolution: and rendered herself as famous for her consummate skill in military affairs and diplomacy, for her grasping ambition, persevering spirit and daring courage, as for the hatred with which she pursued her amiable step-son, and sought to deprive him of his maternal inheritance.† A retrospective glance should have warned her to beware of the pernicious examples of several of the queens, her predecessors, whose ungenerous conduct towards their step-sons had so frequently ignited the torch of civil war, and

* The widow of Martin the Younger, King of Sicily.—ED.

† Queen Blanche became the mother of three children. Charles, Prince of Viana; Blanche, who was divorced on the absurd pretext of witchcraft by Henry IV. of Castile; and Leonora, who married Gaston IV. Count de Foix.—ED.

proved the source of every ill, not only to the kingdom, but to the reigning royal family. But Juana profited not by the lessons of the past, and this one trait throws a shadow over her many good qualities, and the splendid talents that seemed to proclaim her born to reign. Indeed, her hatred towards the hapless Prince of Viana appears unfounded and gratuitous, as it was made manifest long previous to the birth of her own son, Fernando, in whose favour it was natural for one of her ambitious spirit to seek to dispossess the elder son and heir.

Charles was entitled, by his mother's marriage contract, confirmed by the wills of his grandfather and his mother, to claim, at the death of the latter, the kingdom of Navarre, of which he had been, during the last years of her life, the Lieutenant-general; but, content with exercising the rights of a sovereign, he willingly allowed his father to retain the title for some years after the death of Blanche. The calm was broken, in 1452, by Juan sending his young Queen into Navarre, and empowering her to share the administration of government with the Crown Prince and rightful sovereign, whose superior and cultivated intellect, as well as his mature age, should have secured him from such an insult. Juana herself, far from softening the blow by a judicious and mild behaviour, seemed to take pleasure in adding to the Prince's mortification by the most insolent assumption of authority, and an overbearing demeanour, taking no pains to dissemble the malice which she bore him.

It is asserted by some writers that during her stay in Navarre, the Queen wishing to do honour to the Admiral, her father, who was at the time an exile from the court of Castile, desired the Prince should wait on him at table, and that his refusal to do so occasioned the rupture

between him and the Admiral. This story, however, is extremely improbable, as the Queen would never have dared to make such a request of one who was in reality the lawful sovereign of the realm, nor, had she expressed such a wish, would the Admiral, who was an accomplished and courteous noble, have given it his sanction. Two rival factions now divided Navarre; the Beaumonts who sided with their Prince, and the Agramonts who belonged to the old King's party, and confusion and discord reigned throughout the country. Juana, who, at her arrival in Navarre, was in the commencement of her pregnancy, remained there until March of the following year, when the period of her confinement drawing near, unwilling it should take place there, she determined to return to Aragon. She was placed in a litter, but compelled to stop at the first village she came to, after passing the frontiers, and at this place, called Sos, was born Fernando, whose prospects then, as a younger brother, little foretold the glorious destiny that awaited him a monarch of all Spain and lord of a new world. The birth of this son was a joyful event to King Juan, who from that time centred on the offspring of his second wife all his hopes and affections, treating those of the first with an indifference that amounted to aversion.

War now broke out between the rival factions, the Prince claiming his rights and the King withholding them, each alternately gaining the ascendancy, though without any decided advantage on either side. This state of things continued until the year 1457, when the Prince, tired of contending with his father, determined to repair to Naples and solicit the protection and mediation of his uncle Alfonso. While on his way thither he was received with the utmost kindness in France and Italy,

especially in Rome by Pope Calixto, the gallant bearing, refined manners, and (for that age) extraordinary learning of the Prince, winning the admiration and love of all who knew him. On reaching the Court of Naples, he was received with open arms by his uncle, who beheld in this accomplished knight the worthy heir of his kingdoms of Aragon and Naples, Alfonso himself having no legitimate children. With great tact and judgment the King undertook to reconcile the father and son, and put an end to the unnatural contest that desolated Navarre; but unfortunately his death, which occurred in the following year, prevented him from fulfilling his kind and wise designs, and the crown of Aragon fell to his brother Juan, who, during the protracted absence for twenty-three years of Alfonso in Naples, had been Regent of the kingdom he now inherited at the advanced age of sixty-two. Thus Navarre and Aragon were again united, after having been separated three hundred and twenty-three years and eight months, since the death of Alfonso the Warrior. Juan had then been reigning in Navarre nearly thirty-three years since the death of his father-in-law Charles the Noble, and by his contracting a second marriage, was not, in law, entitled to that kingdom which, as the dower of his first wife, reverted to her children. Alfonso had left his kingdom of Naples to his illegitimate son Don Fadrique, but a strong party of the Neapolitans preferring the legitimate nephew to the bastard son, offered the crown to Carlos, who, however, refused it.

The kingdom of Naples being once more the prey of factions, the Prince went over to Sicily, which, in consequence of Alfonso's death, now formed part of Juan's possessions. Here he was received with extraordinary rejoicings, the mental and physical qualities of this elegant

cavalier and accomplished scholar, completely fascinating the enthusiastic Sicilians, who paid him the honours due to him as Prince of Viana, heir on the mother's side of Navarre, and now Prince of Girona, and as heir of Juan, Crown Prince of the kingdoms of Aragon, Valencia, of the principality of Cataluña, and of the kingdoms of Sicily, Sardinia, Mallorca, and Minorca, and other islands of the Mediterranean.

Charles remained in Sicily until the middle of the year 1459. The Sicilians, to whom he daily became more endeared, actually entreated him to accept the sovereignty of Sicily, and the old King alarmed at the excessive predilection shown towards his hated son, now endeavoured to induce him to return to Aragon. Juan's conciliatory messages were received by the Prince with unfeigned joy, and he hastened to comply with his father's wishes that he should return. The generous Sicilians, during the residence among them of the Prince, had voted the sum of 25,000 florins to defray the expenses of the penniless heir of so many kingdoms, and several of the principal lords accompanied him home. The city of Barcelona had prepared magnificent fêtes to celebrate his arrival, but conscious of the jealousy such a reception would cause to his step-mother, Charles prudently declined these honours, and avoiding Barcelona proceeded to Igualada, where he was received by the King and Queen with apparent kindness, reciprocated on his part by the most submissive demeanour and expressions of unfeigned regret for the past resistance he had opposed to them.

But the mask was soon thrown aside by the King, who, urged by Juana, openly reproached the Catalans for doing his son honour as Crown Prince; and in the Aragonese

Cortes, which he convened at Fraga to receive their homage, he refused to allow of their swearing allegiance to Charles as heir presumptive, according to custom.

The Queen, eager to increase the dislike of Juan to his son, and to accomplish the ruin of the latter, communicated to the King a message she had received from her father, the Admiral, purporting that the Prince had concluded an alliance with Castile, agreeing to go thither, marry the Infanta Isabella, and at the head of a large body of Castilian troops return to dispossess his father, and assume his crown. The King, prejudiced as he was against his son, still refused to give credit to a tale where the authority was certainly a partial one, and as such scarcely to be relied on. The Admiral was a disaffected subject of the King of Castile, and an enemy of his daughter's step-son, whom that sovereign sought to protect and support, and his testimony was greatly doubted by Juan. The Queen, seeing her communication disregarded, burst into tears, loudly and bitterly lamenting what she termed the blindness of her husband, who, though warned of his danger by no less a friend than the father of his Queen, and the grandfather of his children, would take no steps to save himself and his family from ruin.

Juana was no mean adept in the art of persuasion; her influence over her aged husband was unbounded, and combatted in his heart by no fraternal affection for Charles. She, therefore, soon accomplished her object. Juan having determined to proceed to extremes against his son, sent him orders to meet him at Lerida, where the Aragonese Cortes was in session. Charles, overjoyed at this, as he hoped his father was about to allow him to be

proclaimed heir, hastened to obey; but on his arrival, found the wily monarch had arranged matters so that the Cortes had been dissolved a few hours previous.

The ambassadors from Castile, who were with the Prince, urging him to fulfil the preconcerted contract with Isabel, at the time he received his father's message, strongly advised him against obeying it, but he was not to be dissuaded. When he came into his father's presence, the latter allowed him to kiss his hand, but ordered his immediate arrest. The Prince astounded at the treachery, broke forth into eloquent remonstrations and expostulations, but to no effect. The news spread through the town instantly, and an unforeseen circumstance, which, with all his cunning, the King had overlooked, overturned all his devised schemes.

The deputies were still in Lerida, and, remembering the privilege that allowed the Cortes to prolong its session for an indefinite period if re-assembled within six hours after its dissolution, that period not having expired, immediately met, and proceeded to take measures in the Prince's behalf. The deputation of Aragon and a delegation from the Council of Barcelona sent an embassy to Juan, inquiring his reasons for thus proceeding against his son. Juan, however, would give no positive answer, merely hinting at a plot having been formed by the Prince against him, and intimating that he himself would punish the conspirator without requiring their advice. This evasive reply caused a ferment throughout the nation. The Queen's hatred to Charles was well known, and it was suspected she would hesitate at no measures that would rid her of the obnoxious Prince who stood between her son and the throne.

Besides the motives that already prompted her to ruin

Charles, the latter feeling how little reliance could be placed on his father's good faith, had accepted the proposal made him by Henry IV. of his sister's hand, hoping, by a marriage with Isabel, to secure a strong ally in the Castilian King, who was, moreover, well inclined towards him. This project was exceedingly galling to the Queen, whose darling plan was to marry her own son to the Infanta, and, to cut short all interference, she hastened the catastrophe of Charles's fate. But she found more difficulty in effecting her purpose than she had anticipated. The indignant Catalans rose *en masse*, and an army was formed, commanded by men of the first rank. The Governor of Barcelona, a partisan of the King, was thrown into prison, a large body of men hastened to Lerida to seize the royal family; and the King, though warned of the danger, barely escaped falling into the hands of his infuriated subjects. His coolness and presence of mind alone saved him; for, having ordered the evening repast to be prepared as usual, he took horse at dusk, with one or two followers, taking the road to Fraga in Aragon. He had scarcely quitted Lerida, when the rebels entered it. They broke into the palace, searching every apartment, and thrusting their swords through the hangings and into the beds, in their determined rage and fear lest the King should lie there concealed, and thus escape them.

The organized army of the Catalans pursued the monarch to Fraga, and entered that town while the royal family, and the Aragonese Cortes assembled there, made their escape to Saragossa. Meanwhile Prince Charles was kept in close confinement in the impregnable stronghold of Morella, on the borders of Valencia. The King of Castile, indignant at the treatment of his friend, sent a body of

1,500 horse to the aid of the Catalans, and the Castilian troops, entering Aragon, ravaged the country through which they passed. The insurrection spread through Aragon, Valencia, Navarre, Sicily, and Sardinia; and the King seeing all resistance vain to oppose the tide of public opinion that threatened to hurl him from his throne, and overwhelm the objects of his love with irremediable ruin, at length decided on restoring the Prince to liberty. To allay the hatred of the people towards the Queen, he made proclamation that he pardoned his son, at the earnest request of Juana, and the latter accompanying the Prince, having met the Catalans near Villa Franca, delivered him into their hands, but was told that she could not be allowed to proceed to Barcelona with him, as she had intended, and was forced to return to Saragossa.

Charles was received with the most extravagant demonstrations of joy in Barcelona, but the hapless Prince was not destined to enjoy long the enviable position in which the enthusiastic love of the people had placed him. From his prison Charles brought the germs of the disease, that, baffling the skill of the doctors, soon after terminated his existence. The war, in the meantime, continued in Navarre with unabated violence, and great success on the part of the adherents of the Prince, who were assisted by the co-operation of Castilian forces. The Catalans, it is true, returned to their allegiance, but not until John had purchased it, by submitting to the most humiliating conditions. The Queen, to whom John had confided the negotiation of these conditions, vainly attempted to enter Barcelona, which refused to receive her; and, on attempting to pass through Tarraga, where she purposed to stop and dine, that town closed its gates against her, the bells being rung at her ap-

proach, as was the custom on the appearance of an enemy, or to order the pursuit of a criminal. The Catalans, among other conditions, exacted that the Prince should be named Lieutenant-General of Catalonia, and that John should never presume to enter that province without previously obtaining the consent of the inhabitants. Bitter as were these conditions, the King, attacked on all sides, was compelled to accede to them, and the Queen signed them in his name. The marriage between Isabel and Charles was, notwithstanding the disparity of their ages—the Prince being in his forty-first year, and the Princess in her thirteenth—about to be concluded, when he was carried off by the fever, that had been wearing him away since his release. Many authors hesitate not to affirm that his death was attributable to poison, administered by Juana's orders, in Morella; and if we consider the hatred she bore him, her insatiable ambition, and the obstacle he offered to the advancement of her own son, there certainly seems a great foundation for suspicion of foul play.

The death of Charles took place on the 23rd of September, 1461, in the seventh month after his release, and this event, though it left the path to the throne free to the son of Juana, occasioned so violent a commotion throughout the nation as greatly to increase the manifold anxieties of the King and his consort. The untoward fate of their beloved Prince was loudly lamented, and his many noble qualities forming a striking contrast to the gloomy, perfidious character of his father, exalting him in the eyes of the admiring but ignorant lower classes, caused him to be worshipped as a saint. During his illness, continual prayers, sacrifices, masses, and extravagant vows were offered to obtain of Heaven his restoration to health, and

after his death, miracles were said to be performed at his tomb.

The haste with which the King caused his son Fernando to be sworn heir in Aragon, within a fortnight of the death of Charles, contrasted also glaringly with the opposition he had made to that ceremony being performed in the case of the latter. The Queen then accompanied her son to Catalonia, in order to obtain the like homage from that province. Here, though apparently all was quiet, the minds of the inhabitants were in a state of ferment that boded no good. The ghost of the unfortunate Prince was said to walk through the streets of Barcelona, demanding vengeance on his murderers; and the exasperation of the people rose to such a height that Juana was forced to withdraw from the capital, though, with the matchless ability that characterized her, she had during her stay managed to obtain her object from the Assembly. Juana retired with her son and a few adherents to the fortified town of Gerona, some fifty miles from Barcelona. Hither she was pursued by the insurgent forces, commanded by the Conde Pallas, a powerful noble.

The town was besieged, and the Queen and her son compelled to take refuge in the tower of the cathedral. The Catalans were so much opposed to Juan and his Queen, that they offered to the King of Castile the sovereignty of all Juan's dominions. The inhabitants of Barcelona proclaimed Juan and Juana public foes and murderers of the Prince of Viana, and sent an appeal to the Pope. Blanche, sister and heiress of Prince Charles, was made the means of procuring for the vexed King the assistance of the French sovereign, who offered troops to Juan if he would place the Princess in the hands of her

sister, the Countess of Foix.* The object of this was to prevent Blanche from marrying again, and thus secure the inheritance of the kingdom of Navarre to the Count de Foix and his wife.†

Juan who was deterred by no considerations of parental affection or duty towards the children of his first marriage, readily sacrificed the hapless Princess, and was compensated by the immediate assistance of seven hundred French lances.‡ The arrival of the French force was most opportune for Juan, who was reduced to the greatest straits in the tower of Gironella. The insurgents forcibly entered the town, but all their efforts to obtain possession of the persons of Juana and her son were vain. Zurita and Abarca tell us five thousand balls were fired at the castle in one day, doubtless a mistake or an exaggeration, but, be this as it may, the assailants spared no efforts to accomplish their object. Wooden towers, of the height of the castle, were erected and surmounted with artillery, and mines were run under the castle, by which the enemy having penetrated, had well nigh accomplished their object. But the little force within, constantly on the alert, perpetually repulsed the besiegers and defeated their designs.

* This purpose was accomplished; and after a conference between the unnatural father and his son-in-law, wherein the Count pledged himself not to molest Juan in his sovereignty of Navarre, which had devolved to him in right of his wife Leonora, the unhappy Princess Blanche was delivered into his custody, and, after a rigorous imprisonment, of several months' duration, ultimately died, under strong suspicions of poison. The crime of this young and beautiful woman had been her firm adherence to the interests of her brother, the Prince of Viana.—Ed.

† *Vide* Life of Blanche, Queens of Navarre, Vol. II.

‡ These seven hundred lances, with the accompanying archers and artillery, constituted a force of 6,000 horse.

The Queen, with the cool intrepidity that formed one of the chief traits of her character, undismayed on her own account, sought only to ensure the safety of her son, regardless of her own. Leading Ferdinand, then a boy of ten years of age, by the hand, she appealed to the good feelings of the defenders of the castle, and, with irresistible eloquence, confided him to their loyalty and devotion, and expressed a confidence in their ultimate success that perhaps she was far from feeling. Without the slightest emotion of fear, she visited every part of the defences, justifying the surname of the "Royal Lioness," applied to her by the Spanish historians.

The arrival of the French at length relieved her anxiety, and the insurgents were forced to raise the siege. The inhabitants of Gerona, who had forsaken the Queen's cause when it appeared desperate, now threw themselves on the mercy of her whom, when sore pressed by enemies, thay had driven from among them, and compelled to take refuge in the tower; but the joy of her release had inclined Juana to clemency, and she freely forgave them their former defection. The King, with an activity that recalled the days of his youth, assisted by his French allies, and many of the Catalan nobles, who, Prince Charles being dead, preferred their own rightful sovereign to a foreign monarch, now rapidly reduced many important places.

The King of Castile being of too indolent a nature to accept the offer the Catalans had made him, they conferred the crown on Don Pedro, a Portuguese noble, and a descendant of the royal house of Barcelona. This Prince had neither energy nor means to support himself in the dignity; and unloved and unlamented by the very nation that had called him, he died of a fever in June of 1466.

The King now resolved to endeavour to negotiate with the insurgents, but with the obstinacy that characterizes them, the Catalans refused to listen to his overtures; and the council at Barcelona suspecting two of the chief inhabitants of the city of inclining to the King, caused them to be executed. The despatches brought by a messenger from the Cortes of Aragon were torn to pieces before his face.

The crown was now offered to René, of Anjou, who, too old to undertake the assertion of the rights thus given him, deputed his son Juan, Duke of Lorraine and Calabria, to secure the prize. This gallant cavalier, a warrior from his youth upwards, endowed with all the qualities of a hero of romance, was well-fitted for this adventurous enterprise. His known prowess and ability as a leader soon brought crowds to his standard, and he commenced his perilous campaign at the head of eight thousand men well armed and equipped. Louis XI., who was too wily openly to encourage this competitor of the King of Aragon, gave him indirect but efficient assistance, by allowing a pass through Roussillon into the north of Catalonia.

This new and violent blow had well nigh staggered Juan, who was just beginning to regain the ascendancy. His ally, the King of France, failed to send the promised subsidies, and his own exhausted treasury offered no resources to carry on the war. The cruelty with which he had treated two of his children, both of whom by his means had met with an untimely death, was now visited on him by the unfilial conduct of his third child, Leonor, Countess of Foix, who, without consideration for the straits to which her aged father was reduced, demanded and prepared to wrest from him the kingdom of Navarre,

the inheritance she had so ruthlessly purchased with the murder of an innocent sister.

Worse than all these evils was the personal misfortune that at this period fell on Juan. His sight, which had been greatly injured by the exposure and privations he had endured during the protracted winter siege of Amposta, now utterly failed him; and the blind, and nearly octogenarian monarch, hated by the majority of his subjects, deserted at his utmost need by his allies, seemed on the eve of being hurled from the throne he had sought to consolidate at the cost of those who should have been as dear as they were near to him. But the energy and resolution that had actuated him in his youth, still remained unimpared in his advanced years, and Juan, in January of 1467, prepared to continue the war on the frontiers of Barcelona with as much alacrity as ever.

One friend, too, was left him, whose dauntless spirit was equal to the task of extricating him from the toils into which her own ambition had precipitated him. Juana, sparing no efforts by which she could procure assistance for her husband, proceeded to Saragossa to preside over the Aragonese Cortes held there, and obtained from them a body of five hundred horse with pay for nine months. At the head of this force, and accompanied by her son Ferdinand, she crossed by water to the eastern shore of Catalonia, where she laid siege to Rosas. The better to facilitate her designs on this place, by cutting off its resources, Juana sent detachments to seize on the surrounding castles. The Duke of Lorraine having, with a view of causing a diversion, laid siege to Gerona, the Queen promptly introduced succours of men and provisions into the city, though she thereby greatly impoverished her own weak force. The stout resistance made

by the governor of Gerona having occasioned great loss of men to the Duke, he retreated to Barcelona.

During the siege of Gerona, young Ferdinand, then fifteen years of age, having, in the heat of his youthful ardour, advanced too far in one of the sallies made by the besieged, was well nigh captured by the enemy, but was saved by the devotion of his attendants,—several throwing themselves between him and his pursuers, and facilitating his escape at the cost of their own liberty. Among these faithful adherents was the brave and noble Don Rodrigo de Rebolledo, whose military fame was such, that after several years of captivity, his freedom was valued at the rate of 10,000 florins.

Notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of Juan and his warlike Queen, the Duke of Lorraine continued his advances, and possessed himself of the fertile district of Ampurdan. In Barcelona his popularity was equal to that which had been enjoyed by the ill-fated Prince of Viana, his princely bearing, noble qualities, and affable, courteous demeanour, securing to him the goodwill of all classes. No efforts were spared to maintain for him the crown which they had bestowed on him. The ladies pawned their jewels to assist in defraying the expenses of the war; and when he rode through the streets his progress was retarded by the enthusiastic demonstrations of affection of the crowds that always surrounded him.

In the meanwhile the indefatigable Juana, insensible to fatigue, notwithstanding the delicate state of her health, set out for Exija, in order to conciliate and pacify the Countess of Foix, and in the interview that took place between these ladies, were settled all the points of difference that had added so much to the embarrassments of Juan.

The Queen and Princess entered into the solemn league, which Kings and Princes entered into for the mutual defence of their dominions, taking the knightly and military oath of being friends of each other's friends, enemies of each other's enemies, against all and every person in the world without exception; the Infanta, binding herself to lend assistance to the utmost of her power, for the defence of her nephew Ferdinand's rights in Aragon, Sicily, &c. And the Queen on her side, swore to defend the rights of Leonora to the kingdom of Navarre. This unparalleled instance of this military oath being taken by two Princesses, took place on the 9th of June of this year, and was witnessed by the Archbishops of Saragossa, and the Bishop of Pamplona. By this treaty, the Princess engaged to wait until the decease of her father for the inheritance of Navarre, of which the Queen ensured her the pacific and undisputed succession. Thus the old Queen's talent for diplomacy removed one of the King's greatest difficulties. But the day was approaching when Juan was to suffer the severest blow of all, in the loss of this faithful and efficient consort.

In the winter of the following year, Juana fell a victim to the painful disease that had long been undermining her constitution, and had occasioned sufferings that would have prostrated most of her sex on a bed of sickness. But her spirit was cast in no common mould, and subduing all manifestation of pain, she continued to the last to endure fatigues and perils with a fortitude more than manly.* Her death was a great calamity, to Juan, for

* "She had left Juan at Tarragona, where he usually resided on account of his ill health, and had gone to Saragossa to preside at the Cortes."—*Calcott's Spain, vol.* II. *p.* 184.—ED.

though her hatred to Charles had involved him in all his difficulties, her uncommon talents and fertile genius afforded him immense resources whereby to overcome them. Of the four children to whom Juana had given birth, Ferdinand, Juana, Leonor, and Marina, the two first alone survived her. The Queen died of cancer, on the 13th of February, 1468, and in the following year, as though to compensate in a measure the loss of this invaluable friend, the King's enemy and competitor, the gallant young Duke of Lorraine, expired in Barcelona, to the great sorrow of the Catalans.

It is reported that on her death-bed, the Queen exclaimed several times: "My son, my son, how dear thou hast cost me!" and though the King is said by some authors to have attended her bed of death with affectionate solicitude, others affirm that having been told that she acknowledged herself guilty of causing the death of his son, he retired to his chamber, refusing to leave it, or to see her until she had expired. It is not very probable that Juan, who had persecuted his son to his last day, and given his daughter up to her mortal foes, would feel so much anger at the conduct of his accomplice in these iniquitous proceedings. Juana was buried, in accordance with her own request, in the monastery of Poblete.

Juan was also fortunate enough to recover, at his advanced age, the use of his eyesight, a Jewish physician having successfully performed the then very unusual operation of couching both his eyes. Thus was this ancient warrior enabled once more to superintend in person the defence of his dominions. The war was carried on with varied success in Catalonia, until the year 1472, when the King made his entry in Barcelona, on the 22nd of Decem-

ber, and in the great palace swore to respect the constitution and laws of Catalonia. But the submission of the Catalans did not bring with it the cessation of war in Juan's dominions. The pretensions of France to the county of Roussillon occasioned a long and destructive warfare, that occupied Juan to the end of his days. Juan died at the age of eighty-two, in Barcelona, on the 19th of January, 1474, having reigned in Navarre fifty-three years, and in Aragon twenty.

# QUEENS OF LEON AND CASTILE.

FROM

1034 TO 1245.

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## DOÑA SANCHA.

### QUEEN OF CASTILE, 1034, AND THIRD QUEEN OF LEON IN HER OWN RIGHT, 1037.

REIGN OF FERDINAND THE GREAT.

DONA SANCHA, daughter of Don Alfonso, first King of Leon, by his wife, Doña Elvira, was first contracted to the young Earl of Castile, as related in the life of Doña Teresa, of Leon. She subsequently married, in 1030, Ferdinand, second son of Don Sancho, King of Navarre. This Prince having inherited in 1034, from his mother, the Condado of Castile, then first erected into a kingdom, became also King of Leon in 1037, by the death of his brother-in-law, Bermudo III., Sancha being the sole heiress of the crown. Before her accession to the throne of Leon, Sancha had given birth to three children, Urraca, Sancho, who succeeded his father, and Elvira, who, long

after her father's death, was married by her brother Alfonso to the Conde de Cabra. In 1035, Sancha gave birth to Alfonso, who also ascended the throne, and some time after to Garcia, the youngest. The education bestowed on these Princes by their parents is highly extolled by the ancient chroniclers of those time.

Ferdinand, who from his many victories over the Moors, and his numerous personal exploits, was surnamed the Great, had done well had he stained his sword with the blood of Infidels alone; but having had some unhappy altercations with his elder brother, Garcia, King of Navarre, who beheld with jealous eyes the superior power of the younger, the troops of the two sovereigns met at Atapuerca, a village within four leagues of Burgos, and after a fierce engagement, Garcia was slain. This battle was fought in 1054. Ferdinand, shocked at the unhappy result of the quarrel, bitterly lamented the death of his brother, and ordered his body to be restored to the Navarrese, that they might return with it to Navarre, and inter it with regal honours.

In the latter part of the King's reign, taking advantage of his advanced age, and the poverty of the exchequer, the tributary Moors, formerly subdued by Ferdinand, rose on every side, but more especially in the kingdom of Toledo, among the Celtiberie (inhabitants of a certain part of Aragon). In this emergency, Doña Sancha gave proof of her patriotic and religious spirit, sacrificing all she possessed in money, plate, and jewels, to defray the expenses of the war. This timely supply so encouraged the King, by enabling him to raise a powerful army, that he attacked the Moors near the Ebro, overthrew them, and advancing as far as Catalonia and Valencia, returned thence with a large booty. The same

success attended him against the Moors of the kingdom of Toledo, whom he obliged to take oath, that they would punctually pay the tribute that Ferdinand had formerly exacted from them. Having returned triumphantly from this expedition, Ferdinand died shortly after, in the year 1067.* Doña Sancha survived her husband two years, and was buried by his side in the church of St. Isidorus, in the city of Leon.

During this reign, the renowned soldier, Don Rodrigo del Bivar, laid the foundation of that fame that has rendered him the most celebrated of Spain's numerous heroes. Don Fernando imitated the evil example set him by his father, in subdividing the kingdom at his death among his children; and this error of judgment occasioned new and violent civil wars, that distracted the kingdom until again united under the sway of his second son, Alfonso. The King's will gave to Sancho, Castile; to Alfonso, the kingdom of Leon, the territory of Campo, and some towns in Galicia; to Garcia, the youngest son,

* During the expedition against the Infidels, the King declared that St. Isidore had appeared to him, and summoned him to prepare for immediate death; and so firm was his belief in the alleged vision, that on reaching his own frontier he sickened, and at once resigned himself to his fate. He returned to Leon by easy stages, and having rallied his remaining strength, repaired in regal state to the church dedicated to that saint, where his tomb had been long prepared; and, kneeling before the high altar, divested himself of his crown and mantle, laid aside his sceptre, and turning towards the people by whom he had been followed into the sacred temple, exclaimed, solemnly: "Thou, O Lord, art above all the monarchs of the earth, who are alike subject unto Thee: Thine is the power: Thine the authority; the kingdom which Thou gavest me I restore to Thee again; and I beseech Thee, by Thy mercy, to receive me into the light eternal." The sacraments for the dying were then, by his command, administered to him by the officiating priests, after which he sprinkled ashes upon his head, and assumed a habit of coarse serge. —Ed.

the remainder of Galicia, and as much of Portugal as had been taken from the Moors. To his daughter, Urraca, he gave the town of Zamora, and to Elvira that of Toro. This King has been celebrated for his many good and noble qualities, and his Queen no less so, being described as "a right excellent lady, of good understanding, right loving to her lord, whom she ever counselled well," being herself called the mirror of his kingdom, and the friend of widows and orphans."

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## INES,
## CONSTANCIA,
## ZAIDA, OR ISABEL,
## BERTA OF TUSCANY,
## ELIZABETH OF FRANCE,
## BEATRIX.

REIGN OF ALFONSO VI.

THE beneficial influence of Doña Sancha maintained a show of harmony among her children during the short period that elapsed between the death of Ferdinand and her son; but the rancour occasioned by the division of the kingdom, which he considered should have been united under the eldest son, could not long be suppressed by Sancho, and in the fourth year of his reign, he attacked, defeated, and imprisoned his brother Garcia, depriving him of the domains assigned to him by his father. Not content with this increase of power, the insatiable ambition of Sancho, aiming at the recovery of

all his father's dominions, now waged war against Alfonso, the King of Leon; and, though the first day the tide of battle was against the Castilians, who were routed, the courage and perseverance of Don Rodrigo del Bivar rallied them on the second, and the Leonese, in their turn, were defeated, Alfonso himself being taken a prisoner to Burgos. To secure his life, Alfonso consented to take orders in the monastery of Sahagun; but a monastic life was ill-suited to the warlike spirit of one whose youth had been spent in the martial exercises of the chivalry of that age, and, through the instrumentality of his sister Urraca, by whom he was greatly beloved, Alfonso escaped and took refuge at the court of Almenon, the Moorish King of Toledo. Here he remained some time, being treated with great courtesy and hospitality, by Almenon, to whom he greatly endeared himself, by his winning manners.

Meanwhile Sancho caused himself to be crowned King of his brother's domains in Leon. His reign was, however, of short duration; for in the year 1073, having laid siege to the city of Zamora, the inhabitants, loyal adherents of their sovereign lady, Doña Urraca, with her consent, chose for their Captain Don Gonzalo Arias, a brave commander, who had been her tutor, and Sancho met with a resistance that proved fatal to him in the end. After many encounters between the townsmen and besiegers, the King was mortally wounded by a traitor, who, under pretence of communicating some piece of intelligence to the King, struck him with a lance, and escaped into the city.* Thus ended the reign of Sancho, surnamed the Brave, on the 13th October, 1073.

* Urraca and some of her adherents were suspected of having insti-

The death of the King caused the utmost confusion in the camp, the majority of the troops disbanding and returning to their homes. The Castilians alone remained before the town. The body of the King having been buried in the monastery of St. Salvador of Oña, by a number of his nobles and gentlemen, on their return to the camp, they challenged the men of Zamora, through Don Diego Ordoñez, Count of Lara, to mortal combat, charging them with having sent the assassin, Velido Dolphos, to murder the King. According to the customs of that age, if a metropolitan city or a bishopric was challenged, the challenger was bound to combat with five knights in succession, being allowed, however, to change his horse and arms in the intervals, and refresh himself with food and wine. Though Zamora was not a bishopric, the brave Count of Lara allowed of five champions being opposed to him, and vanquished successively Don Pedro, Don Diego, and Don Rodrigo, the three sons of the Governor, Don Gonzala Arias. The Judges of the lists here ordered that the combat should proceed no farther, though the Count insisted on continuing it until he had fought with five knights, as they refused to decide the question of the justice of the accusation. Meanwhile, the Infanta Urraca, having sent messengers to Alfonso, informing him of the death of his brother, and urging his instant return, the Prince took leave of the Moorish sovereign, and, loaded with presents by his generous host, hastened to Zamora.

Sancho, who had never married, having no son, Alfonso was unanimously acknowledged heir to the kingdoms of Leon and Castile, though the Castilians insisted, ere he

gated this murder, in order to free themselves from an enemy, against whom they were no longer able to contend.—Ed.

was crowned, that he should take an oath that he had no share in the murder of his brother. This Alfonso readily consented to do, the famous Rodrigo del Bivar being, however, the only chieftain who dared administer the oath to the new sovereign.*

Of Ines, the first wife of Alfonso, all we know is the name, and that she died in the second year of his reign, after his restoration.

Constance, the second wife of Alfonso, was the daughter of Robert, Duke of Burgundy, and his wife, Ermengarde; and became the mother of Doña Urraca, who inherited her father's crown.†

Though mindful of the generous manner in which he had been harboured by the King of Toledo, Alfonso maintained peace with Almenon, and his son and successor, Hissem; assisting the former, unsolicited, with a large body of troops against his enemy, the King of Cordova. On the accession of the second son, Hiaya, this

* It is certain that the Cid himself was not backward in exacting the required pledge, as, on the appearance of Alfonso in the Cathedral of Barcelona, which had been selected as the scene of the ceremony, del Bivar compelled the King to comply with all the stringency of the Castilian law, which required the oath to be thrice repeated; and Alfonso, although he submitted to this indignity, for as such he regarded it, long resented the want of respect, which such an exaction exhibited towards his sovereign rank, as an unpardonable presumption on the part of his haughty subject.—Ed.

† On her arrival at Burgos, whither she was conducted by the King immediately after her marriage, the royal bride expressed in unmeasured terms her horror at the lax state of the Christian Church in Spain; and at her earnest entreaty a council was held in that city, presided by Richard, Abbot of Marseilles, as Legate of the Pope, at which numerous ecclesiastical reforms were enacted, and amongst others the discontinuance of the Musarabic liturgy, and the universal observance and use of the Romish ritual.—Ed.

friendship and alliance between the Christians and Moors ceased entirely. Hiaya, by his tyrannical conduct, having incurred the odium of a large portion of his subjects, and the enmity of the other Princes of Spain, was finally besieged by Alfonso, in 1083,* and expelled from his dominions. On the taking of Toledo, the Queen is said to have incurred her husband's displeasure in the following instance: the town having, after an obstinate resistance, submitted to Alfonso, among other conditions, it was stipulated in the capitulation, that the Moors should retain in their possession the chief mosque. No danger was to have been apprehended, though the Moorish inhabitants far outnumbered the Christians, had not the rashness of the Queen, and of the new Primate, Don Bernardo,† who had remained in Toledo with a small garrison, exposed the city to fall once more into the power of its former possessors. That the largest and most beautiful building should remain and be still appropriated to the worship of the Prophet, was a subject of great discontent to the lady and the priest, and, their religious zeal blinding them to the consequences, they resolved on gaining possession of it by surprise. Having entered it by night, they caused everything pertaining to the Moors to be cast out, erected altars, hung bells, and at daybreak summoned the Christian inhabitants to mass.

The Moors, though justly incensed at this perfidious violation of the treaty, confiding in the known justice of the King, refrained from taking vengeance by their own

* The siege of Toledo lasted two years. This ancient capital of the Goths was entered by the victorious Alfonso, May 25, 1085, after it had been in the hands of the Moors upwards of 374 years.

† Don Bernardo, the Abbot of Sahagun, who had recently been elevated to the Archbishopric of Toledo.—Ed.

hands, though they might easily have exterminated the small band of Castilians. Nor was their reliance on Alfonso ill-founded, for the King no sooner heard the news of this unprovoked act of aggression, than he hastened to Toledo, resolved to punish severely the perpetrators. Apprised of the sovereign's angry determination, the Christians sallied forth to meet him, attired in mourning garments, and prostrating themselves at his feet, implored mercy for the thoughtless offenders. Their prayers had no influence, but when all hope of softening the King's inflexibility had vanished, it was revived from an unexpected quarter. The Moors, pleased with the readiness manifested by Alfonso to right their wrongs, and doubtless fearing lest his present severity, by exasperating the Christians, might prove fatal to them at some future period, now urged the King to waive all resentment and forgive the delinquents. This petition coming from such a quarter so much gratified the sovereign that he not only readily granted it, but ordered that that day should be ever afterwards commemorated, under the name of our Lady of Peace,* and promised he would ever be favourable to them.† Constance died shortly afterwards, and was buried in Leon.

* This incident is related by Garibay as having occurred in the life of Queen Beatrix, but Mariana and others relate it of Constance. Garibay also calls the second of Alfonso's Queens *Beatrix*, and the fourth *Constance*. It is almost impossible to say which is the correct order in which these six queens should be given, where there is so great a diversity of opinion.

† Still, however, the indignity to which they had been subjected rankled in the hearts of the people, and three years after the invasion of their mosque, exasperated by the determination of the Queen and the Archbishop to enforce the Romish ritual, they demanded the trial by ordeal, and by duel, for the ancient liturgy; and in order to satisfy them, a

After the death of Constance, Zaida, a Moorish Princess, daughter of Benabet,* King of Seville, became, according to some authors, the wife of Alfonso.† Zaida is said to have been induced to adopt the Christian faith by a dream, in which St. Isidorus appeared to her and persuaded her

great procession, headed by the two sovereigns, the Primate with the whole of his clergy, and the magistrates of the city, proceeded to the great market-place of Toledo, where the two books were flung into the flames of a huge fire which had been kindled for the purpose. Neither of the volumes were consumed, but the whole of the characters of the Romish ritual were obliterated by the smoke. As the Queen refused to acknowledge this result to be a failure on her own part, the duel was demanded, and the Musarabic rubric again proved victorious; but, notwithstanding this double defeat, Constance, whose zeal for her religion continued unabated, had sufficient influence over the King to induce him to issue an edict declaring both rituals to be equally good, and commanding that the ancient book should be used in those chapels which had existed during the dominion of the Moors; and the Romish liturgy in such as had been more recently erected or newly-consecrated; and with this decision all parties were compelled to remain satisfied.—Ed.

* Or Aben Abed.—Ed.

† The constant successes of Alfonso alarmed Aben Abed, who, seeing the cities and fortresses on the Tagus successively fall into his hands, wrote to the Castilian monarch, who had long been his ally, to remonstrate; but a long continuance of good fortune had rendered the latter less inclined than heretofore to demur to the wishes of the indignant King of Seville, and he accordingly replied by not only demanding tribute at his hands, but also the cession of some fortified places which he alleged to appertain to the kingdom of Toledo. The Moorish monarch retorted by putting out the eyes of his messenger, and causing the five hundred soldiers by whom he was accompanied in order to enforce his claim to be massacred, an act of barbarity which induced an immediate war with the Infidels, in which the latter were for a time successful; but the King of Aragon and the Cid, who had experienced better fortune than Alfonso himself, and Jusuf, the Mahommedan ally of Aben Abed having returned to Morocco, the King of Seville found himself compelled to sue for peace with Castile; and in order to effect this he offered to Alfonso the hand of his daughter Zaida in marriage, with the cities of Cuenca, Ucles, and Huete as her dowry.—Ed.

to become a convert. Her father, whom she acquainted with the resolution she had formed, made no opposition to her wishes, but, fearful that his approbation might excite discontent among his subjects, agreed that she should undertake an excursion to a place from whence Prince Alfonso, second son of the reigning King of Castile, could assist her to escape to Leon. This scheme having been successfully executed, the Princess was received with all kindness by the Christian sovereigns, instructed in the dogmas of her new creed, and baptized Isabel, or, as some assert, Mary. Zaida subsequently became the third wife of Alfonso, though Pelagius, Bishop of Oviedo, denies her ever marrying that sovereign, and asserts that she was only his mistress. Of Zaida was born Don Sancho, who died in battle when but eleven years of age.

Nothing can be more characteristic of the warlike spirit of those times, than the death of this, the King's only son, at an age when, in these degenerate times, children think only of their toys. Hali, King of the Moors, having entered the kingdom of Toledo, in the year 1100, wasted the country, and finally advanced within sight of the city itself. The King, disabled by illness from heading his troops in person, gave the command to Don Garcia, Conde of Cabra, tutor of the Prince, and brother-in-law of Alfonso, and, to add to his power and authority, permitted the youth to accompany him. The two armies met near Ucles, and the young heir of Castile and Leon, clothed in armour, fought side by side with his father's veteran warriors, against the enemies of his country and religion. The Infidels, greatly outnumbering the Christians, finally won the battle, the Prince being struck down in the heat of the fight. Don Garcia covered him with his shield, and fought for some time with the courage of despair,

until, overpowered by numbers, he dropped dead on the lifeless body of the Prince. This instance of precocious valour is not the only one to be found in the history of those stirring days, when war and the chase were almost the only occupations then deemed worthy of the sons of royalty.

The mother of this Prince died soon after his birth, but in what year we are not told by any of the ancient chroniclers. At the time of Zaida's conversion, another Moorish Princess also renounced the creed of the Prophet, and her adoption of the Christian faith is gravely ascribed by several authors to the following miracle. Casilda, daughter of Almenon, then King of Toledo, was of a very compassionate nature, and frequently relieved the wants of the captive Christians, thereby greatly offending her father, who, though he subsequently proved so good a friend to Alfonso, seems to have been very averse to his daughter's manifesting such tokens of pity. Meeting her one day with a dish of dainties, which she was conveying to some of her *protégés,* the King inquired what she had there; and, she answering they were *roses,* he raised the cover, and, lo! the meat was found to have vanished, leaving in its stead the flowers she had named. Not being over credulous, we prefer ascribing the marvellous conversion of the two Princesses to the agency of the little blind deity.

Berta, of Tuscany, was the fourth Queen of Alfonso, and Elizabeth, a French Princess, but of what parentage we know not, the fifth. By Elizabeth, Alfonso had two daughters, Sancha, who married Count Roderick Gonzalez de Lara, and Elvira, who married Roger, the first King of Naples and Sicily. Beatrix, the sixth and last of Alfonso's

Queens, brought him no children, nor is anything beyond her name known with any certainty concerning her.

Alfonso, whose whole life was spent warring with the Moors, over whom he obtained many victories, was assisted by several foreign Princes, whom he not only rewarded with princely generosity, but on whom he bestowed his daughters in marriage. To Ramon, the ninth Count of Toulouse, he gave his illegitimate daughter, Elvira, and to Henry, a descendant of the Dukes of Lorraine, he gave Teresa, another illegitimate daughter, and from this marriage, was born Alfonso Henriquez, the first King of Portugal. Urraca, the eldest daughter of Queen Constance, he gave to Raymond, brother to the Count of Burgundy, and subsequently, on the death of Raymond, to her cousin Alfonso, Infante of Aragon and Navarre. Alfonso died in the year 1108, in the seventy-fourth year of his age and the thirty-fifth of his reign, (counting from the death of Sancho,) leaving the crown to his eldest daughter and heiress, Urraca.

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## DOÑA URRACA.

### 1108.

QUEEN OF ARAGON AND NAVARRE, AND, BY RIGHT OF INHERITANCE, FOURTH QUEEN OF CASTILE.

Urraca, daughter of Alfonso VI., and of his Queen, Constance, by the premature death of her only brother, Sancho, slain at the battle of Ucles, became the heiress of a crown she subsequently disgraced by her licentious conduct. The death of this promising youth, on whom,

from his good qualities, the nation founded great hopes, was the more to be deplored, as it left the throne to one who seems to have been endowed with neither ability, sense, nor talent for governing. By her first husband, Raymond, brother to the Count of Burgundy, Urraca had one son, Alfonso, who was brought up in Galicia, of which his father had been named Governor, with the title of *Count*,* by the King. Raymond is said, by some authors, to have died in 1100, though others place his death several years later. The Castilian nobles were desirous that the widowed Princess should marry one of their own body, Gomez, Conde of Candespina, and deputed Cidelio, the Jewish physician of Alfonso, to suggest the match to the King. The monarch was so indignant at the proposal, that he banished the hapless messenger for ever from his Court.

In the year 1103, Alfonso bestowed Urraca on Alfonso, brother of Pedro I., King of Aragon. The latter dying in the following year, and her husband being the next heir, Urraca became Queen of Aragon. This second marriage proved a very unhappy one, from the want of affection between the wedded pair, and the levity and imprudence of Urraca, who is said to have entertained a decided preference for the handsome Castilian noble. The death of Alfonso VI., in 1108, rendering it necessary for the heiress of his domains to return to Castile, Urraca preceded her husband, at the time engaged in settling the affairs of his own kingdom, and by her first acts proved herself totally unfit for the important post she was to fill. With as little policy as gratitude, she removed from the management of public affairs Peranzules, a man in great repute, who had

* The title of Conde was at that time the highest in Spain.

enjoyed in a large degree the favour of the late King, who had reposed unbounded confidence in him. Nor was the sovereign's reliance vain, for since his death the minister's prudence and wisdom had maintained the kingdom in peace and tranquillity. Peranzules, who had been the Queen's tutor, is said to have incurred her displeasure by his severe remonstrances on the impropriety of her conduct, but the reason she gave was his having, in the letters he had sent to inform her of her father's death, addressed her husband as "King of Castile." She carried her resentment so far as to deprive him of his estates, but Don Alfonso ordered that they should be restored to him.

A new war breaking out in Andalusia, now demanded the King's attention. Hali, King of the Moors, taking advantage of the death of King Alfonso, invaded the Christian territories, and advancing as far as the city of Toledo, demolished the castle of Azeca, destroying the monastery of St. Servandus, and ravaging the surrounding country. He even laid siege to the city, battering it for the space of eight days, with all the engines of war then in use. The natural strength of the city, and the wall built below it by the late monarch, foiled the attempts of the Moor. It was also well defended by Alvar Fañez, one of the greatest soldiers of that epoch. Seeing no prospect of Toledo surrendering, the Moors raised the siege, and returned home loaded with spoils, plundering on their way Madrid and Talavera, which towns they left entirely dismantled.

In Aragon, however, the King was more successful, taking, in 1110, from the Infidels, the town of Exea, in Navarre, and overthrowing, in a battle fought near Valterca, Abubasalem, King of Zaragosa. He then assumed the title of Emperor of Spain, as his father-in-law had

done, and having finally settled matters in Aragon, he passed over into Castile in 1111. Here he used all his endeavours to conciliate the affections of the people, protecting the weak, relieving the distressed, treating the nobles with the respect due to them, and observing towards all classes the strictest impartiality in the administration of justice. His affability would have won him universal goodwill, had he not forfeited the love of the Castilians, by placing garrisons of Aragonians in many important fortresses, especially in those situated on the frontiers of Aragon and Navarre. Having directed the towns destroyed by the Moors to be rebuilt, the King returned to Aragon with the Queen, whom, her conduct having become notorious, he imprisoned in the castle of Castellar, near Zaragosa. With the assistance of some of her Castilian followers, Urraca managed to escape and return to Castile, but the nobles fearing the evil consequences of a separation, which would inevitably bring a rupture between Aragon and Castile, with all due respect, sent the Queen back to her husband, and a momentary reconciliation was patched up between them. Meanwhile the nobles of Galicia, displeased that Castile should be under the sway of the Aragonese, alleged, that as no dispensation had been obtained from the Pontiff, the Queen's marriage was illegal, and they were not bound to obey one who was not their lawful sovereign.*

The utmost confusion now reigned in the divided kingdom. The King of Aragon, who had again imprisoned his wife, though he desisted, after taking by storm the

* Don Alfonso was the third cousin of Doña Urraca, both being the great-grandchildren of Don Sancho the Great. As it was not usual for the Pope to grant a dispensation in such cases, this consanguinity frequently offered a specious pretext for obtaining a divorce.

castle of Monterroso in Galicia, from further acts of overt hostility, persecuted those whom he suspected of disaffection to his cause, depriving many of their estates. The Galicians leagued with Henry, Count of Portugal, and notwithstanding his extreme youth, proclaimed the son of Urraca King of Castile and Leon. This young Prince was greatly beloved by the Galicians, having been brought up among them from his infancy, under the care of Don Pedro, Count of Trava. He was anointed in the Cathedral of Compostilla, by James Gelmirez, Bishop of that see. This ceremony was then performed for the first time in Spain, and was introduced to add solemnity on this occasion to the proclamation.

The King of Aragon, greatly incensed, now procured a divorce from his wife, whose alliance seemed of no avail to secure him her inheritance, which, however, he prepared to retain. Doña Urraca was no sooner free, than she asserted that she had been forced into marrying Alfonso, and that the latter was aiming at possessing himself of the Prince's person, in order to poison him, and seize the crown himself. The King of Aragon, refusing to give up the fortresses and towns he held in Castile, many of the alcaldes revolted to the Queen, whom alone, since her divorce, they considered entitled to their allegiance. Peranzules, though a man of strict integrity, thought himself in duty bound to do the same, but his nice sense of honour causing him to feel some scruples, from his having formerly sworn allegiance to Alfonso, he presented himself before the latter, clothed in scarlet, mounted on a white steed; and, bearing in his hands a halter, placed his person at the sovereign's disposal, to be done by as best suited his pleasure. Alfonso, though offended at his breach of faith, could not but forgive his loyalty, and

treated him courteously. All the nobles of Castile now united to throw off the yoke of the King of Aragon, whom, despite his many good qualities, they regarded as a stranger; and, had the Queen possessed the judgment and prudence indispensable at such a crisis, she would have, undoubtedly, made good her right to the crown. Her evil passions could not, however, be subdued by the critical circumstances in which she was placed, and her undisguised partiality for the Count of Candespina, her former suitor, greatly displeased her subjects. Though the Queen's manifestations of preference was particularly injurious to her interests, its object was not, in the present case, unworthy of it, for the Conde was in the flower of his age, remarkable for the grace and elegance of his person and manners, brave, resolute, and zealous for the interests of his country. He was, unfortunately, made to share the command of the Queen's forces with Pedro, Count of Lara, another successful candidate for the Queen's favour, and the rivalry between the chiefs was productive of the worst effects. The King of Aragon now entered Castile by the way of Soria and Osma, at the head of a powerful army, and having been met by the Queen's forces, both parties encamped near Sepulveda, and prepared to give battle. This engagement, called from the field where it took place, *de la Espina*, is one of the most famous of that age. The dastardly Count of Lara fled at the first shock, and joined the Queen at Burgos, where she was anxiously waiting the issue, but the brave Count of Candespina stood his ground to the last, and died on the field of battle. His standard-bearer, a gentleman of the house of Olea, after having had his horse killed under him, and both hands cut off by sabre strokes, fell beside his master, still clasping the standard with his arms, and

repeating his war-cry of "Olea!" The defection of Henry, Conde of Portugal, who, in disgust at the Queen's conduct, went over to the Aragonese, completed the defeat of her party.

The nobles of Galicia, having recruited their forces, again sought to oppose the progress of the foe, and were again defeated, between Leon and Astorga. The young sovereign, Don Alfonso, retired to the castle of Orfilon, where his mother was residing. No battle of that age was so fatal to Castile. The towns of Najara, Palencia, Burgos and Leon submitted to the conqueror, and his success would have been complete, had he not, being greatly in want of money to pay his troops, appropriated to that purpose the treasures of the churches. The people, who could forgive the misery and desolation brought on them by the ambition of one man, their harvests destroyed, and homesteads burnt to the ground by a foreign foe, were greatly shocked when he availed himself of such sacrilegious means to carry out his purpose, and from that time fortune began to forsake him.

After ravaging the kingdom of Toledo, the Aragonians prepared to lay siege to the city, as it was supposed that the Queen intended making a last effort on that side. At this juncture, Martin Muño, while on his way to join the King of Aragon, fell into an ambush, he himself being taken prisoner, and the three hundred men who accompanied him killed or dispersed. The loss of this reinforcement, joined to his having greatly diminished his numbers by leaving garrisons in the towns he had taken, so much weakened his army, that Alfonso determined to retire to Canion, confiding in the strength of that place, and here he was, for some time, besieged by the Queen's troops, until the Abbot of Chisensis, appointed by the Pope to

endeavour to settle the difference, prevailed on Urraca, first, to grant a truce, and, finally, to raise the siege. This was an injudicious step, as the Castilian troops, being raw and undisciplined, could not be kept together when inactive.

The Aragonian now bent his forces against the domains of the house of Lara; while Urraca, after a long siege, recovered the castle of Burgos. Pedro, Count of Lara, encouraged by the Queen, and hoping to marry her, took on him the state and authority of King, thereby exasperating the haughty Castilians, and his name was coupled with hers in numberless insulting ballads and lampoons. He was at length imprisoned by Don Jaime Gelmirez de Castro, but contrived to escape, and fly to Barcelona. Prince Alfonso was again proclaimed King of Castile, and laid siege to the castle of Leon, in which his mother had fortified herself. It was finally agreed between them, that the Queen should resign the crown to her son, and that he should allow her a suitable sum for her maintenance.

It is almost impossible to fix the dates of all these events, there being such a diversity of opinion among authors concerning them; neither is it known precisely when Doña Urraca died, though it is generally supposed she survived her father seventeen years, and expired about the year 1136. Some authors assert she died in childbed, in the castle of Saldaña; and there is a tradition of her having been suddenly deprived of life at the door of the church of Leon, after robbing it of the treasure of St. Isidorus. It is also said that Urraca gave birth to a son, whose father was the Conde of Candespina, and who, from his birth having been kept secret, was called Fernan Hurtado. From this son the noble family of the Hurtados

in Spain derive their origin. Alfonso, surnamed the *Warrior*, (El Batallador,) reigned in Castile, as the husband of Urraca, four years.

This sovereign is not counted by many Castilian writers as sovereign of Castile, but the Aragonians assert his claim to that title; and Garibay vindicates it, on the ground, that he was as much entitled to it as Don Alfonso I. and Don Sibo were to that of Kings of Oviedo and Leon, or as Don Ferdando I. was to that of King of Leon and Castile, as these Princes were all indebted for their thrones to their wives. Alfonso's whole life was spent in a series of battles; for having, after Urraca's resignation of her rights to the throne, made peace with her son, he turned his arms against the Moors, over whom he won many victories, greatly increasing his dominions at their expense. The greatest of his achievements was the conquest of Saragossa from the Infidels, on the 18th of September of the year 1118, after a siege of four years.

Alfonso was killed at the siege of Fonga, on the 14th September of the year 1134, having reigned in Aragon and Navarre thirty years, during which time he is said to have fought twenty-nine battles with Christians and Moors. As he left no son to succeed him, he willed his domains to the Knights of Jerusalem, the Templars, and the Knights of the Hospital; but this singular donation never was fulfilled, the Navarrese choosing for their sovereign Don Garcia Ramirez, a nephew of the deceased monarch; and the Aragonese, Don Ramiro the Monk, brother of Don Alfonso the Warrior.

# DOÑA BERENGARIA.

## 1128.

# DOÑA RICA.

## 1150.

REIGN OF ALFONSO VIII.

DONA BERENGARIA was the daughter of Raymond Berengarius, fourth Count of Barcelona, and of his wife, Dulce, Countess of Provence. The fame of her beauty and intellect procured her many suitors, from among whom she chose Alfonso VIII., King of Castile and Leon, and the nuptials were celebrated with great pomp and magnificence at Saldaña, in 1128. This Princess, endowed by nature with firmness and strength of mind seldom found in her sex, was besieged in 1139 by the Moors, in Toledo. Having demanded a parley with the enemy, the Queen appeared on the ramparts, and, addressing the Moorish chiefs, reproached them as recreant and coward knights thus to besiege a woman, when their arms were needed to defend Overa, at that time besieged by her husband. The Moorish cavaliers, with the gallantry that characterized that chivalrous race, acknowledged the justice of the lady's taunts, and ordered a retreat, the Queen condescending to receive the homage of the troops as they filed off under the walls.

The Castilians having subsequently, and, by way of retaliation for some act of a similar nature committed by the Moors, beheaded two Saracen chieftains, who had

been taken prisoners, the heads were placed on the walls of the royal palace of Toledo. The Queen, horror-struck at the sight of these sanguinary trophies, had them taken down immediately, embalmed, and placed in two mourning chariots, in which they were, by her orders, conveyed to the widows of these victims of war.

A year after the Queen's marriage, in 1129, some doubts having been started as to the lawfulness of the union,* Cardinal Humbertus came to Spain as Pope's Legate to examine the case, and having assembled a synod of bishops in Leon, these declared the marriage legal, the parties not coming within the degrees of consanguinity proscribed by the Church. This good and amiable Princess, though beloved by her subjects, esteemed by her foes, and the consort of one of Europe's most powerful sovereigns, was far from enjoying that domestic happiness to which her many virtues entitled her. An unworthy rival long held her place in the heart of the faithless Alfonso, and embittered every joy of the hapless Queen. This mistress, whom the King loved with the most ardent passion, was Gontrada, an Asturian lady of high rank. She had a daughter, Urraca, by the King, for whom her fond father procured a throne, by marrying her to Garcia Ramirez, King of Navarre. Gontrada subsequently retired to a monastery of nuns, which she had built in Oviedo, and there ended her days.

Berengaria gave birth to four sons, Sancho and Ferdinand, who both succeeded their father, the one in Castile and the other in Leon, and Garcia and Ferdinand, who died young. She had also two daughters, Constance,

* Alfonso VIII. was the great-grandson of King Ferdinand I., and Berengaria, his wife, was the great-granddaughter of that monarch's brother, Don Ramiro I., King of Aragon.

who, in 1154, married Louis VI. King of France, and Sancha Beatrix, who married Sancho the Wise, King of Navarre.* Berengaria died on the 3rd of February, 1149, and was buried in the church of St. James the Apostle, in Galicia.

Rica, the daughter of Uladislaus, Duke of Poland, was the second wife of Alfonso VIII., whom she married in 1150, and by whom she became the mother of one daughter, Doña Sancha. After the death of her first husband, the King of Castile, Rica married Raymond Berengarius, Count of Provence. Alfonso himself died in 1157.

This Prince was endowed with the qualities that became his station; and the following incident is illustrative of his impartial administration of justice:—A gentleman of Galicia having arbitrarily wrested from the owner a small estate, the dispossessed proprietor repaired to Toledo, and presenting himself to the King, demanded redress. Alfonso, having ascertained the truth of the peasant's statement, immediately wrote to the oppressor, bidding him restore the land, and also to the *merino-mayor* of Galicia, to enforce his commands. Both, however, failing to comply with the sovereign's orders, Alfonso set out from Toledo in disguise, and, on arriving in Galicia, caused the residence of the *infanzon* to be surrounded. The latter, apprized of the King's intention, fled, but was pursued, seized, and hung at his own door. The King then caused the land to be restored to its proprietor. This summary punishment of the infraction of the law produced very beneficial results in Galicia, ins-

* Thus the two half-sisters married two Kings of Navarre; the illegitimate daughter of Alfonso marrying the father, Garcia Ramirez, and the legitimate marrying the son, Sancho the Wise.

much as it acted as a curb to the lawless nobles and gentry. Alfonso, though not the first of the Spanish monarchs to style himself Emperor, was the first who was solemnly crowned by that title, and had it approved and confirmed by the Pope, in 1135.

After his coronation, Alfonso took the unfortunate resolution of dividing his realms during his life-time between his sons, giving to Sancho, the eldest, the kingdoms of Castile and Toledo, which, according to the limits he assigned, constituted the better part of his dominions; and to Ferdinand, the second son, Leon and Galicia. The King was advised to this most injudicious measure by some of his nobles, who shared his confidence and favour; these perfidious counsellors hoping to increase their own power during the troubles they foresaw would emanate from this division. On his return from a successful campaign against the Moors, in the course of which he had taken from them the city of Baeza, and the towns of Andajas and Quesada, and having left his son Sancho in charge of these newly-acquired possessions, Alfonso felt the first symptoms of the disease that was to prove fatal to him. Overcome by the violence of the distemper, he found it impossible to reach Toledo, and was compelled to stop and rest under a large oak near Fresneda.

Here the last rites were administered to the expiring monarch by the Archbishop of Toledo, Prince Ferdinand being also with his father; and under this oak the high and mighty Alfonso VIII., Emperor of Spain, expired in the thirty-sixth year of his reign, in August, 1157. The body was conveyed to Toledo, and interred there with royal honours by Prince Sancho, who, when the news of his father's death reached him, abandoned the new con-

quests, and hastened to perform the last honours to a parent who had deprived him of a large portion of his inheritance; while Ferdinand, forgetting all filial respect in his haste to secure his own interests, forsook the corpse and hurried to Leon, to take possession of his domains. Thus, under the sons of Alfonso, in 1157, took place the separation of Castile from Leon, first united under Ferdinand I., in 1037; and these kingdoms were not again united until the reign of Ferdinand III. in 1230.*

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## BLANCHE, QUEEN OF CASTILE.

### REIGN OF SANCHO III.

BLANCHE was the daughter of Garcia Ramirez, nineteenth King of Navarre, by his first wife, Margarite. During the reign of Alfonso VIII., Navarre was threatened with an invasion by that sovereign, but Garcia having had an interview with him, all differences were amicably settled, and the young Blanche betrothed to Sancho, whom his father had already designed as his successor in Castile. The extreme youth of the bride precluding the marriage taking place for some years, she was entrusted to the care of her future father-in-law, to be educated at his court.

* The civil war which ensued after the death of Alfonso, compelled his widow to take refuge with her daughter, Doña Sancha, at the court of Raymond, Count of Barcelona and Prince of Aragon, whose heir had been betrothed to the young Princess. Here they were honourably received, and at the request of her relative, the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa, Rica consented to become the wife of Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence. —ED.

In 1144, her father, Garcia, who was then a widower, in order farther to strengthen his alliance with Alfonso, married Urraca, that sovereign's illegitimate daughter. These frequent intermarriages did not prevent the little kingdom of Navarre from being frequently menaced by the ambition of its powerful neighbours; and, in 1150, Alfonso entered into a league with Raymond, Prince of Aragon, to dethrone his son-in-law, Sancho, surnamed the Wise, who, by the death of his father, Garcia Ramirez (also a son-in-law of Alfonso), had that year succeeded to the throne. It was agreed in Tudelin, between the Castilian and Aragonese sovereigns, that they would divide Navarre between them; and it was also then and there proposed, that Blanche should be divorced, but to this Sancho, who was extremely fond of her, refused to consent. Blanche was very amiable, and her beauty and fairness are said to have been such as to fully deserve the name she bore.

In 1153, a year after her marriage, the Princess presented her husband with a son, who was named Alfonso, and who succeeded his father. Blanche died in childbed, in 1158, on the 24th of June, and it is probable her infant did not survive her, as no other child but Alfonso is mentioned. Sancho, whose private character is without a blemish, was also endowed with qualities befitting a King, and greatly beloved by his subjects. His sweetness of temper and generosity of heart prevented his taking advantage of his superior power to crush that of his brother Ferdinand, and to deprive the latter of the domains his father had given him; and when the King of Leon, on the false report that the King of Castile intended to invade his dominions, hastened to his presence and offered to do

homage to him for his kingdom, the magnanimous Sancho answered, that "the son of so great a monarch never should be the vassal of another, even of his own brother."

Unfortunately for his people, Sancho survived his beloved consort but little more than two months, dying on the 31st August of the same year, and leaving his only son, a child in his fifth year, exposed to the dangers threatened by the ambition of his uncle.

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## DOÑA URRACA OF PORTUGAL.

### 1165.

## DOÑA TERESA.

### 1175.

## DOÑA URRACA DE HARO.

### 1177.

(QUEENS OF LEON.)

REIGN OF FERDINAND III.

DONA URRACA, daughter of Alfonso I., King of Portugal, and of Malsada his Queen, was, in 1165, married to Ferdinand III., who had inherited the kingdom of Leon, in 1157, from his father, Alfonso VIII. Doña Urraca was, in 1175, on the usual plea of consanguinity,*

* Doña Urraca of Portugal, the first wife of Ferdinand, was her husband's second cousin, both being the grandchildren of two sisters, Doña Urraca and Doña Teresa, daughters of Alphonso VI.

divorced from her husband, notwithstanding which, her son by the King was declared heir to the crown. This divorce was preceded and followed by long wars between Leon and Portugal. The King of Leon still farther incurred the displeasure of his father-in-law, by building on the borders of the latter's dominions the town of Cuidad Rodrigo, following in this the advice of a banished Portuguese.

Teresa, daughter of Fernandez Perez de Trava, was the second wife of Ferdinand, to whom she was married in 1175, immediately after his divorce from his first Queen. Doña Teresa died in 1180, leaving no issue. Four years after the death of Teresa, Ferdinand married Doña Urraca Lopez de Haro, daughter of the Conde Don Lopez de Haro, Lord of Biscay, Najera, and Haro, and of his wife, Doña Aldonza Ruiz de Castro. Doña Urraca having given birth to two children, Garcia and Sancho, soon became anxious that her sons should take precedence of the heir apparent, Don Alfonso, who, she concluded, being the issue of a marriage that had been annulled as unlawful, was a bastard, and, consequently, not entitled to inherit the crown.

The Queen's unjust treatment of her step-son so irritated the young Prince, that he determined to take refuge with his grandfather, the King of Portugal; but, as he was preparing to cross the Tagus, he was overtaken by messengers bringing the news of his father's death, on which he immediately turned back. Remembering the wrongs inflicted on him by his step-mother, the new King deprived her of the towns of Monteagudo and Aguilar, assigned to her as a jointure by the late sovereign. That of Monteagudo sustained a long siege, surrendering only on the death of the Alcayde, struck by the shaft of an arrow,

while on the ramparts. Aguilar held out still longer, its garrison not submitting until compelled by famine, having previously consumed, to allay the pangs of hunger, the most loathsome animals, hides, and even grass. After the untimely death of her son, Don Sancho, who was torn to pieces by a bear, while hunting, Urraca retired from the world to a Cistercian monastery in Villena, eight leagues from Burgos, and there passed the remainder of her life. The date of her death is unknown.

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## ELINOR OF ENGLAND.

### (QUEEN OF CASTILE.)

### 1170.

REIGN OF ALFONSO IX.

Don Sancho, King of Castile, dying in 1158, and leaving an orphan heir, not five years of age, to the care of Fernandez Gutierez de Castro,* occasioned a long period of confusion and bloodshed in Castile. The ambition of Ferdinand, King of Leon, his uncle, and the rivalry of the two powerful houses of Castro and Lara, all apparently contending for the honour of protecting and guarding the royal orphan, but in reality for their own advancement, distracted the wretched kingdom. The late King's will having, furthermore, ordered that each noble and cavalier should, until the Prince attained his

* Gutierez de Castro was the foster-father of the baby-king.—Ed.

majority, which was fixed at his fifteenth year, retain the command or office which he held at the time of Sancho's death, this clause produced much trouble. The disputes for the possession and guardianship of the young King, which divided the Laras and the Castros, favouring the schemes of Ferdinand, he invaded Castile at the head of a large force, and possessed himself of nearly all the towns and fortresses. Don Manrique, the noble into whose hands the boy-King had passed after the death of Fernandez Gutierez, not only placed the revenues of Castile for the space of twelve years in the hands of Ferdinand, but also promised Alfonso should do him homage as his vassal, and engaged to give him the charge of his nephew. Don Manrique arriving with the King of Leon at the town of Soria, where the Prince resided, sent for him, in order to fulfil this infamous agreement. The child, whose imagination had probably been worked on by his attendants, at sight of his traitorous guardian burst into a passion of tears, which were interpreted by them to proceed from his being hungry, and Don Manrique consented to his being taken to the palace in order to procure him some refreshment. Here, as preconcerted, a loyal and noble gentleman, Don Pero Nuñez de Fuente Almexir, wrapping the boy-king in his mantle, placed him before him on a fleet steed provided for the purpose, and conveyed him in all haste to the town of San Estevan de Gormaz. Ferdinand, meanwhile, was urgent to see his nephew; and the condes and cavaliers who were in the secret of his escape, in order to facilitate it by gaining time, replied to all inquiries concerning him, that he was asleep, until, losing all patience, the King sent for the child's tutor, and sternly demanded where his pupil was.

Unable to evade the question, the preceptor replied, that a gentleman had taken the Prince away in the name of the King.

Ferdinand, enraged at the disappointment, ordered pursuit to be made after the fugitives; but the Conde Don Manrique, regretting his base promise, and sending timely notice to Don Pero Nuñez, on the arrival in Soria of the King, the bird had again taken wing. The Prince was thus for some time conveyed from place to place, until he was finally left in the hands of the citizens of Avila, who swore to guard and protect him until he came of age; a promise so faithfully kept, that it gave rise to the saying, of any man who was remarkable for good faith and loyalty, "he came from Avila." When Alfonso attained the age of twelve years, it was judged advisable that he should make a progress through the kingdom, the minds of the people being predisposed to revolt and shake off the yoke of Ferdinand. A guard of a hundred and fifty horse of the townsmen of Avila, and a large number of gentlemen and nobles, escorted the young King, and every town through which he passed hailed him as its lord, with great demonstrations of joy.

Peace having finally been restored, ambassadors were sent to England to solicit for Alfonso the hand of Elinor, daughter of Henry II. and his Queen Elinor, the divorced wife of Louis VII., King of France. The nuptials were celebrated with great pomp at Tarragona, in September, 1170; Don Alfonso, the King of Aragon, being present and giving away the bride.* The King of Castile, charmed with the beauty of his bride, signalized himself

* The dowry of the Princess was the right to Gascony, an appanage of Castile.—Ed.

by his munificence, settling on her as a jointure a large part of Castile, Burgos, Medina del Campo, and a number of towns, besides assigning as her portion of the spoils half of all that should be conquered from the Moors. Elinor gave birth to thirteen children: Blanche, who married Louis VIII., King of France; Berengaria, who married Alfonso IX., King of Leon; Ferdinand, Sancho, and Enrique, who died young; Urraca, who, in 1208, married Alfonso, eldest son of the King of Portugal; another Ferdinand, who died at the age of twenty, in 1211; Constance, who took the veil, and became Abbess of the monastery of Huelgas, where she died, in 1243; Leonor, who married James, King of Aragon; Malsada, who died unmarried; two daughters who died in their infancy, and whose names have not been recorded; and, finally, another Enrique, the youngest child, and sole surviving son, who lived to succeed his father.

A story is told, in some of the ancient chronicles, of Alfonso's attachment to a beautiful Jewess of the name of Rachel, with whom he remained seven years in Toledo, secluding himself from all society but hers, and neglecting the cares of government, until his nobles, incensed at the King's blind infatuation, slew the fair one in the presence of her lover. Though at first the monarch was inconsolable for the loss of his mistress, he was roused to a sense of his folly by the remonstrances of some of his faithful counsellors, and, shaking off the apathy in which he had hitherto lived, applied himself to the duties of his high post with renewed energy. This account is, however discredited by the majority of the historians, who give, as a cogent reason for their disbelief, the difficulty of finding, in the life of Alfonso, the period of inactivity mentioned in the tradition, as, during his whole reign, he was con-

stantly employed in wars with the neighbouring Kings of Leon and Navarre, and, above all, with the Moors. Don Alfonso is described as being a very kind and affectionate husband, and this account, if true, certainly precludes the possibility of his affection having been for any length of time diverted into another channel. This monarch died on the 6th of October, 1214, at the age of fifty-seven, after a reign of fifty-three years. His Queen, whose virtues are highly eulogised, was so overcome with grief at his loss, that she survived him but a few days, dying on the last day of the same month.

## DOÑA TERESA, (SAINT TERESE.)

### (QUEEN OF LEON.)

#### REIGN OF ALFONSO IX.

This Princess, daughter of Sancho I., King of Portugal, and of his Queen, Dulcis, was, in 1190, married to Alfonso IX., then in his eighteenth year, who had succeeded his father, Ferdinand II., on the throne of Leon. Teresa was celebrated for beauty, benevolence, and piety; and having been born long previous to the accession of her parents to the throne, was brought up at the court and in the society of her grandfather, whose favourite companion she remained from her seventh year until the period of her marriage. On this occasion, the aged monarch presented his loved grandchild with a trousseau, surpassing in magnificence that of any Princess of that age.

During the first years of her wedded life, Teresa gave birth to a son, Ferdinand, who died young, in 1214, and

to two daughters, Sancha and Dulcis, neither of whom were ever married. The royal pair being within the degrees of consanguinity proscribed by the church, Pope Celestine, who at that time occupied the papal chair, issued his commands that they should separate. This injunction being disregarded, the kingdoms of Leon and Portugal were laid under an interdict, which was not raised until the divorce took place, in 1296. Teresa then returned to her native land, with Dulcis, her youngest daughter, and there retired to a Cistercian convent, near Coimbra. Here she remained in peace, giving all her attention to winning a more lasting crown than the earthly one of which she had been deprived, until the death of Alfonso, in 1230, obliged her to leave her peaceful retreat, and assist in settling the disputes as to the succession.

The deceased sovereign, either from jealousy of Ferdinand, his son by his second wife, Berengaria of Castile —who was already sovereign of that kingdom—or averse to the union of the two kingdoms, had in his will left the crown of Leon to the two Infantas, his daughters by Teresa; and the claims of these Princesses were supported by the nobles of Leon, who were extremely unwilling that the kingdoms should come under one crown.

The young sovereign of Castile, however, determined to make good his right to his father's dominions, and great preparations were making on both sides, when matters were brought to a peaceful conclusion in a conference that took place between the Queens, mothers of the contending parties. The interview between these two ex-Queens of Leon, both of whom had been divorced from Alfonso on the same grounds, was in Palencia del Miño; and it was then agreed that the Infantas should cede their

claims to the crown, and receive an adequate compensation, as a dower, from their half-brother. The point having been thus amicably adjusted, Teresa returned to her monastery, where she spent the remainder of her life, distinguishing herself by the piety and numerous charitable deeds that procured her to be canonized by Pope Clement XI., in 1705.

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## DOÑA BERENGARIA.

### (QUEEN OF LEON, 1196, REGENT OF CASTILE, 1214, QUEEN IN HER OWN RIGHT OF CASTILE, 1217.)

REIGNS OF ALFONSO IX., KING OF LEON; AND OF HENRY I. AND FERDINAND III., KINGS OF CASTILE.

THIS lady, the eldest daughter of Alfonso VIII., King of Castile, and his Queen, Elinor of England, was in the year 1197 married to Alfonso, King of Leon, after his divorce from his first wife, Teresa of Portugal.* This marriage, to which the King of Castile was extremely averse, but to which, urged by his Queen, who was desirous of thus securing peace with Leon, he at last consented, was not more lawful than the first one that Ferdinand had contracted, the parties standing within the same degrees of consanguinity. Innocent III., who then occupied the papal chair, refused to grant a dispensation, but inclination joining with the more solid considerations of state policy, the King persisted, and was united to his beautiful and accomplished kinswoman. The nuptials were celebrated with great splendour in Valladolid, where

* Berengaria had previously been affianced to Conrad, the son of the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa.—ED.

the two sovereigns met for that purpose; and the dower of the bride consisted of the towns her father had previously taken from her husband. Berengaria gave birth to Ferdinand, under whom the crowns of Leon and Castile were subsequently united; to Alfonso, Lord of Molina; to Berengaria, who married John, King of Jerusalem; to Leonor, who died in 1202; and to Constance, who became a nun, and died in her convent, of Huelgas de Burgos, in 1242. The mutual attachment of the King and his consort prevailed over their religious scruples, and they resisted, for nine years, all the Pontiff's endeavours to part them; but the kingdom being laid under an interdict, they were obliged, in 1209, to separate. Berengaria returned to her father's dominions and remained high in honour, and greatly loved and respected at his court, until his death, in 1214. Alfonso and his Queen, both well aware of the superior intellect and abilities of their daughter, left her Regent of Castile at their death, the heir-apparent, Henry, being as yet but a child.

The ambition of the chief of the powerful house of Lara rendered the post of Regent one of difficulty and danger; and foreseeing the anarchy which would ensue, should she attempt to retain the reins in spite of these turbulent nobles, she convoked the States at Burgos, and there abdicated the regency in favour of Count Alvaro de Lara. Berengaria, in whom the love of power was ever subordinate to the love of peace, thought, by taking this step, to insure a cessation of the strife and discord that had hitherto prevailed among the nobles, relying on the superior power of the Laras to curb that of the rest.

Roderick the Archbishop,* returning from Rome, on

* The celebrated historian.

the eve of the Princess's resignation, endeavoured to dissuade her from so impolitic a proceeding; but the Queen had gone too far to recede, and the prelate was obliged to content himself with exacting an oath from the Conde, ere he allowed him to accept the regency, that he would take no important steps, impose no new taxes, nor make either peace or war without consulting the Queen, and that he would ever treat her with the deference due to her as the daughter, sister, and wife of kings. This solemn oath proved a poor and inefficient barrier to the will of Don Alvaro, whose tyranny soon rendered him odious. The offended nobles, and especially Don Lopez de Haro, son of the head of the great house of Haro, and Don Gonzalo Ruiz Giroa, the Lord High Steward, resenting his overbearing insolence and unjust exactions, repaired to Berengaria, and bitterly complained of the evils she had occasioned by her resignation of the Regency, which they earnestly entreated she would resume. Though she dared not oppose the all-powerful Conde, the Queen endeavoured, by mild remonstrances, to adjust the differences, and remedy the mischief.

Having sent for Don Alvaro and his two brothers, who shared his authority, she reminded him of his oath, and exhorted him to use his power with moderation, prudence, and impartiality for the good of the nation. Her admonition produced no beneficial effects, and served but to enrage the imperious noble, who, resenting her interference, seized the Queen's estates, and banished her from the kingdom. Berengaria, unable to resist for the time, retired to the strong castle of Otella, near Palencia, accompanied by her sister Eleanor. Here she was joined by many of the nobles, among whom came the Lord of Haro, at the head of his vassals.

The Regent had, on his side, his own powerful connections, and by retaining the person of the young Prince, greatly increased his adherents. Henry, whose inclination led him to side with his amiable sister, vainly endeavoured to escape to her, but Don Alvaro, to whom he was indispensable, kept a strict watch over all his motions. To conciliate the youth's favour as much as was consistent with his safe keeping, the wily Regent endeavoured to keep young Henry amused with the pastimes most agreeable at his age, and also attempted to bring about a match between him and the Infanta Malsada, sister to the King of Portugal, Don Alfonso. This ridiculous project of marrying a mere boy greatly grieved Berengaria, who no sooner heard of it than she wrote to the Pope, requesting his interference, and representing the parties as being too nearly allied to allow of the legality of the marriage. In the meanwhile, the ambassadors sent by Don Alvaro having concluded the alliance, the nuptials were celebrated in Palencia in 1216.

The Pope having appointed Tello and Maurice, Bishops of Palencia and Burgos, to examine the case, the Queen's objections were pronounced valid, and the marriage annulled. The maiden bride returned to Portugal, and in the convent of Rucha, which she caused to be erected, spent the remainder of her life. Don Alvaro is said to have presumed to make an offer of his own hand to Malsada, which was indignantly refused by the Princess. The enmity between Berengaria and the Regent occasioned great confusion, the nation being divided into factions; and rapine, incendiarism, and murder were rife throughout the distracted country. The Prince being at Maqueda, his sister attempted to open a correspondence with him, but her letters being intercepted by Don Alvaro, his fertile

imagination suggested a scheme to render her an object of hatred to the nation. Having caused the hand and seal to be closely imitated, he published letters purporting to be from her, and containing injunctions from some of her partisans to poison the Prince. To give some colour to this calumny, the Queen's messenger was strangled. The fraud having been discovered, the inhabitants of Maqueda were so much incensed that they rose *en masse* against the slandering Conde, and had certainly slain him, but that he escaped to Hueta with his royal prisoner. Thither the Queen sent another messenger to the Prince, to inform him of the state of affairs, and to concert with him some plan of escape.

Don Alvaro's spies, however, were too much on the alert, and the Queen's trusty adherent was seized and imprisoned, though, fearful of again incurring popular rage, the Regent dared not attempt his life, but vented his anger on all whom he suspected of favouring his adversary. Having assembled his forces, he laid siege to Montalegre, whose Lord, Don Suero Tellez Giron, though provided with ample means of sustaining a long siege, being summoned in the young King's name, surrendered. From thence he moved to attack Carrion and Villalon. Don Alfonso de Meneses, who held the latter place, was beyond the walls at the time, but, attended by a few of his followers, he cut his way through the enemy; and though, in so doing, the greater part of his servants were killed and himself desperately wounded, he succeeded in effecting his entrance into the town, which he so stoutly defended that the besiegers were compelled to withdraw. Having taken Calahorra, the Regent carried the war into Biscay, against its Lord, Don Lopez de Haro, but the mountainous nature of the country, and the attachment of

the inhabitants towards their chieftain, foiled all his efforts, and, after a protracted warfare, he was obliged to return, without having gained any advantages. Don Lopez then joined the Queen at Otella. Some authors assert, that a marriage was at this time negotiated between Henry and Sancha, daughter of the King of Leon by his first wife, one of the conditions being, that she should inherit the throne of Leon, to the exclusion of Ferdinand, that monarch's son by Berengaria.

An unforeseen event now occurred, which completely changed the face of affairs. While at play with youths of his own age, in the court of the Bishop's palace in Burgos, a tile fell from the roof on the Prince's head, wounding him so severely that he survived but eleven days, dying on the 6th of June, 1217, in the fourteenth year of his age, and the third of his reign. The deceased King Henry had two sisters older than himself—Blanche, married to Louis, son of Philip Augustus, King of France; and Berengaria, who had been married to, and divorced from, the King of Leon. Blanche being the eldest, had undoubtedly the best right to the crown; but her alliance with a foreign Prince, her consequent estrangement from her native land, and the love the people bore to Berengaria, who had dwelt long among them, and whose winning manners and sterling good qualities had won universal goodwill, decided the point in favour of the younger sister.

A large number of the nobles having met, declared in favour of her right to the crown. It being necessary that matters should be settled ere the King of Leon should hear of the death of Henry, lest he might be tempted to lay claim to the crown in right of his wife, though separated from her, messengers were sent to desire that he

would send to Berengaria her son Ferdinand, as she required his assistance. The King, ignorant of the important event that had transpired, immediately complied with the request; and on the Prince's arrival at Otella, the Queen made over to him her right and title to the throne. The urgency of the case precluding much ceremony on the occasion, the Prince was crowned at Najara, under an elm-tree. Don Alvaro himself contributed to the success of the Queen's schemes, as, to further his own designs, he concealed young Henry's death for some time from the people, carrying the body about with him in a litter, and issuing commands in his name.

The Queen and her son having gone to Valladolid, the latter was there again proclaimed sovereign of Castile, by the assembled Cortes, in a large open space in the suburbs, and from thence having been conveyed to the cathedral, he received the oath of allegiance. By the advice of the nobles, overtures of peace were made to Don Alvaro, but his insolent pretension to become the guardian of the new monarch, rendered them of no avail. Ferdinand was at this time about eighteen.

The King of Leon, enraged at the duplicity practised upon him, jealous of his son's sudden elevation, and offended at matters having been arranged without his participation or knowledge, invaded Castile. Berengaria sent two Bishops to endeavour to appease him; but, secure of the co-operation of Don Alvaro, he refused to listen to any argument they could adduce, and continued to advance until the energetic measures and bravery of Don Lopez de Haro compelled him to retreat to his own dominions. Don Alvaro having at length consented to the body of the late King being interred, it was delivered to Berengaria, who caused it to be buried with regal honours

at Huelgas, by the side of his brother Ferdinand. The death of Don Alvaro, and the pacification of the whole kingdom, soon followed.

In 1219, Berengaria having negotiated a marriage between her son Ferdinand and Beatrix, daughter of Philip Augustus, went as far as the borders of Biscay to receive the bride. Within a short time after, the Aragonians, having sent ambassadors to Castile, to ask the hand of Leonor, sister of Berengaria, for their young sovereign, James II., the Queen Dowager accompanied her sister to Agreda, on the borders of Castile and Aragon, where the nuptials were celebrated.

In 1224, having established peace in his own dominions, Ferdinand undertook a war against the Moors, and obtained great advantages over them. Whatever success this King obtained, he no doubt owed to his mother's prudent and wise counsels. Berengaria, who had herself been the nurse of her son Ferdinand from his earliest years, instilled into his mind the soundest principles of morality, Christian wisdom, and civil policy. She now found herself amply repaid in the respect and affection of her son, who never failed to consult her in all his undertakings, and invariably left her Regent during his expeditions. In all the important events of Ferdinand's life, we find his mother taking an active part, and entrusted by him with full power.

On the death, in 1230, of his father, Alfonso X., Berengaria was appointed to negotiate with Teresa, the first wife of the deceased sovereign, the renunciation of the rights to the crown of Leon of the two Princesses, his daughters by Teresa, which would secure to her son the pacific possession of another throne.

In 1238, we find this indefatigable mother negotiating

a match between her son, then a widower, and the Lady Joanna, daughter of the Count of Poictiers. And, again, at the latter end of the year 1242, we find the King, at the close of a successful campaign against the Infidels, spending forty-five days at Pozuelo (now Cuidad Rodrigo), to treat of important affairs with his mother, who awaited him there for that purpose. This truly great and good Queen died at an advanced age, in 1245, greatly lamented, not only by her own family, who were indebted to her for their continued prosperity, but also by the nation, whose welfare had been the constant study of her long and well-spent life.

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## DOÑA BEATRIX DE SUEVIA.

(QUEEN OF CASTILE.)

1219.

(QUEEN OF LEON AND CASTILE.)

1230.

REIGN OF FERDINAND III. (THE SAINT).

Beatrix, daughter of Philip, Duke of Suevia, and of his wife Irene, was the first German Princess that sat on a Spanish throne. Her nuptials with Ferdinand III., at that time King of Castile only, were celebrated with great pomp and magnificence, in Burgos, on the 27th of November of the year 1219.* In November of the following

* Maurice, the Bishop of Burgos, performed the marriage ceremony; and the solemnities observed on the occasion were rendered the more

year, the Queen gave birth to her eldest son, Alfonso, who subsequently ascended the throne, and was surnamed *the Wise* and *the Astrologer*. The birth of this Prince was followed by those of six sons and two daughters: Frederick, Ferdinand, Henry, Philip, Sancho, and Manuel, Leonor and Berengaria. The German names of Frederick and Philip, and the Greek one of Manuel,* were now, for the first time, introduced in Spain by the Queen, who named these sons after her own relatives. Leonor died young, and Berengaria took the veil in the convent of Huelgas. The beauty and virtues of Beatrix are highly extolled in the annals of those times, and her piety is said to have equalled that of her husband. As a convincing proof of the religious zeal of the latter, we are told that he set fire with his own royal hands to the faggots that were to consume the condemned heretics! It may be objected that the titles of Great and Saint are ill bestowed on a Prince who could thus outrage the laws of humanity; but what would appear in the present day a deed of monstrous cruelty was then a meritorious and praiseworthy action, heretics being regarded in the light of noxious, plague-tainted beings, whose existence endangered the weal of the community, and whose impurity could be purged by fire alone.

The same man, who would have recoiled with horror from inflicting the slightest pain on a strict believer in the

remarkable, from the fact that on the day previous, the King armed and dubbed himself a knight, there being no individual present on the occasion of sufficient rank to perform the office for him.—Ed.

* Manuel, youngest son of Ferdinand, by his wife Beatrix, was first married to Constance, daughter of James I., King of Aragon, and after her death, to Beatrix of Savoy, by whom he had Don Juan Manuel, so often mentioned in the subsequent reigns of Sancho the Brave and Ferdinand the Summoned.

same dogmas, would stifle all feelings of pity, as criminal, where an Infidel was concerned. Nor can this relentless and bigoted cruelty be ascribed to the Catholic faith alone, for scarcely a creed is exempted from the same reproach; and we shall find, if we examine the subject with impartiality, that ignorance and superstition have prevailed to as great a degree, and exercised as baneful an influence, among Protestants as among Catholics.

After a peaceful and prosperous reign, Doña Beatrix died in 1235, having worn the diadem of Castile sixteen years, and that of Leon five.

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## DOÑA JUANA.

(QUEEN OF CASTILE AND LEON.)

1237.

(SECOND WIFE OF FERDINAND III.)

THE death of Beatrix leaving Ferdinand a widower, his indefatigable and politic mother immediately began to cast about for a Princess worthy of taking the place of the late Queen. The lady selected, with her usual tact, by the Dowager Queen, was Juana, daughter of Simon Count of Daummartin and Boulogne, by his wife, Maria, Countess of Ponthieu. The marriage was celebrated in 1237, in the town of Burgos.

Juana had been contracted to Henry III., King of England, but it having been ascertained that the parties

NOTE.—Juana was the great-granddaughter of Louis VII. of France, by his third wife, Alix.

were within the degrees of consanguinity prohibited by the Church, the match was broken off.* This Queen gave birth to Ferdinand, Leonor, and Louis, the French name of the latter being for the first time given to a Spanish Prince. Of her three children, the daughter alone survived the Queen. This Princess was, during the reign of her half-brother Alfonso, married to Edward, the Black Prince,† son of Henry III., her mother's former suitor. The death, in 1252, of the husband, with whom she had lived happily fifteen years, though it took from Juana the honours of a reigning Queen, caused no diminution in the respect paid to her by her step-son, Alfonso, who confirmed the jointure settled on her by his father. Three years after the death of Ferdinand, Juana returned to her own country, and in 1260, contracted a second marriage with John of Nesle, Lord of Faluy and Herelle, by whom she had a son, or, according to some authors, a daughter, Juana de Nesle. Doña Juana died on the 16th of March, 1278, leaving her domains of Ponthieu and Monstruell, to her daughter Leonora, wife of the Prince of Wales, who, with her husband, entered on possession of her inheritance in June of the following year.

* The true reason is said to have been the attachment Henry had subsequently formed for the lovely Eleanora of Provence, as a dispensation could have been obtained for his marriage with Juana, but the King sent to recall the ambassadors who were on their way to solicit it, and who had nearly reached Rome.

† This Prince visited the court of Castile, in order to claim his betrothed bride, in 1254. He was received with great pomp, and knighted by Alfonso himself, then the reigning monarch. The Prince of Wales was accompanied by his mother, the accomplished and still beautiful Eleanora of Provence.

# VIOLANTE.

## (QUEEN OF LEON AND CASTILE.)

## 12.

REIGN OF ALFONSO XI., SURNAMED THE WISE AND THE ASTROLOGER.

THIS Princess was the daughter of James the Conqueror, King of Aragon, by his second wife, Violante of Hungary. In 1248, she was married to Alfonso, heir presumptive of Castile and Leon, and on the death of her father-in-law, Ferdinand III., her husband ascended the throne. The alliance between Aragon and Castile, of which the union of Alfonso and Violante had been the pledge, was neither sincere nor durable. The ambition of Alfonso, ever on the alert to extend his own dominions at the expense of his father-in-law, was the fertile source of frequent broils, and, in the very first year of his marriage, had nearly led to an open rupture. The young Prince of Castile, not content with interfering with his martial father-in-law's conquests over the Moors, demanded as part of his wife's dower, the town of Xativa, which the Aragonian monarch indignantly refused to cede, and the dispute was with difficulty settled. It is probable that the Castilian entertained but little affection for his young wife, as in 1253, under pretext of her sterility, he endeavoured to obtain a separation, and, even before it was effected, so sure was he of the Pope's consent, that he sent ambassadors to solicit the hand of Christina, Princess of Norway. The event proved that he had been too hasty, for ere the arrival of

the destined bride, who was to take her place, the Queen had given unequivocal hopes of an heir.

Alfonso was thus thrown into great perplexity, from which he could find no better issue than marrying the disappointed Princess to his brother Philip, who had been intended for the Church, and even elected Archbishop of Seville.* The Queen gave birth to Berengaria, her first-born child, in 1253, and in December of the following year, to her second daughter, Beatrix. The birth, in 1255, of her son Fernando, sworn heir to a crown, which he was never to wear, was followed by that of Sancho, who succeeded to the throne. The other children of Violante were Pedro, Juan, James, Violante, Isabel, and Leonor.

The sweetness of temper, and winning manners of the Queen were of great use in conciliating the differences that occurred between the King and his brother Philip, and other nobles, in 1274.

Her prudence and amiability having obtained a peaceful settlement of the dispute on far better terms than those to which the King had been willing to accede, the latter expressed himself highly pleased. Alfonso having, in the following year, left Spain in order to assume the imperial crown, to which he had been elected, named the Queen, in union with her son Ferdinand, to the regency of the kingdom during his absence, which was not, however, of

* "The Princess Christina accordingly set out from her father's Court, and crossing Germany and France, arrived, nearly worn out with fatigue, at Valladolid. But by this time the Queen had a daughter, the King was reconciled to her, and Christina, mortified and disappointed in her hopes of an honourable marriage and the state of a Queen, died in a few months afterwards, although Don Philip, the King's brother, had offered her his hand."—*Callcott's Spain, vol.* i. *pp.* 431-2.—Ed.

long duration, not only on account of his meeting with the Pope in Provence, but also of the disturbances occasioned by the Moors, and the death, in his twenty-first year, of the Crown Prince.* On his return, the King found the state of affairs much better than he had been led to expect; the valour and activity of his second son, Sancho, having given a decided check to the Moors. So pleased was the King with his conduct on this occasion, that he caused him to be sworn as his successor to the throne, in preference to the sons of the late Prince, Don Fernando de la Cerda.†

The Queen was exceedingly grieved at the injustice done to her grandchildren; and fearing lest the ambition of Sancho might endanger the safety of these rightful heirs, she determined to ensure it by confiding them to the protection of her brother, the King of Aragon. To this effect, under pretence of going to Guadalajara, she left the Court of Castile: and, with her daughter-in-law, Blanche of France, and the two young Princes, arrived in Aragon in the beginning of 1277, at the commencement of the reign of Don Pedro III. Alfonso being informed of the Queen's designs, and aware of the evils that would accrue from the residence of his grandchildren at the court of his powerful neighbour, sent in pursuit of the fugitives, but in vain, as they had already passed the frontiers.

* Ferdinand had been previously united, in 1273, to Blanche of France, the daughter of St. Louis; and the marriage festivities, which were unusually brilliant, were held at Burgos; where the presence of the Kings of England, Castile, Aragon, and Granada, Philip, the heir to the French throne, and a long train of Spanish, French, and Italian nobles, rendered this court, for a time, the most magnificent in Europe.—Ed.

† *De La Cerda*, so called from having been born with hair on his chest.

Don Sancho also wrote to his mother, entreating that she would return; and his persuasions at length proving effective, provided a large sum to defray the expense of her homeward journey and the debts which she had incurred during her residence of two years in Aragon. Though Violante had manifested such solicitude for the Infantes de la Cerda, she proved herself, subsequently, entirely destitute of firmness in the disputes that took place between the King and Prince Sancho, in which the former, exasperated by the ingratitude of his son, vainly endeavoured to deprive him of the right of succession, which he himself had bestowed on him, and substitute his disinherited grandchildren.

Violante now openly sided with her second son, who, since her return from Aragon, had treated her with marked deference, associating her with him in the administration of justice in his progress through the towns of Castile and Leon, during which she accompanied him. The quarrel between the father and son soon waxed high, and the Queen, not content with thus favouring the son, gave the sanction of her presence to the Cortes, assembled in 1282, in which Alfonso was deposed, and the title of King bestowed upon Don Sancho. Alfonso survived this blow but two years, dying on the 4th of April, 1284.

This monarch, whose weak and impolitic conduct render him little deserving the title of the *Wise*, might with greater propriety be designated as the *Learned*, his acquirements being extraordinary for that age. Of his proficiency in astronomy he has left us a proof in the astronomical tables which he composed; and that science being then usually confounded with that of astrology, he was surnamed the *Astrologer*. His knowledge of jurisprudence is evinced in the compilation of the Laws of the

Partidas, from the Justinian and Wisigothic Code.* There is also a chronicle bearing his name. But like James I., of England, with all his knowledge, he was utterly destitute of sense and judgment, and might be justly called a learned fool. Devoid of firmness and resolution, his very weakness often caused him to perpetrate acts of excessive cruelty, one of which has left an indelible stain on his memory, and took place on the occasion of the Queen's flight into Aragon. Alfonso suspecting Violante had been advised to this step by his brother Don Frederico, and Don Simon Ruiz, Lord of Cameros, son-in-law of Frederico, gave orders for their immediate apprehension, and that the latter should be burned alive, and the former strangled, without even the semblance of a trial.

This unparalleled cruelty is said to have been occasioned by the King's astrological studies, the stars having predicted that one of his own blood would dethrone him. This atrocious deed did not save the credulous monarch from the fate he had endeavoured to evade, his son Sancho subsequently verifying his prognostics. The pretensions of the weak, yet ambitious monarch, to Suevia, in right of his mother, Beatrix, the daughter of Philip, Duke of Suevia, and Emperor of Germany, and his obstinate persistence in aspiring to the imperial dignity, involved Alfonso in a lavish expenditure in support of his claims, that greatly incensed his subjects. In his disputes with his nobles, he evinced a pusillanimity that subjected him to their contempt, and led in the end to

* Alfonso also caused the Bible to be translated into Spanish, and was the first King who ordered that language to be used in public writings and documents, Latin having previously been employed in all matters of jurisprudence and divinity.

the majority favouring the cause of his ungrateful, but brave and able son. Having repented of his injustice to the children of his elder son, he vainly attempted to remedy it by disinheriting Sancho, and excluding him from the succession; and the Pope also interfering in behalf of the deposed King, and placing the kingdom under an interdict, until he should be reinstated in his rights, the tide began to change and many nobles returned to their allegiance. Sancho finding himself losing ground, endeavoured to procure a reconciliation, and would probably have been willing to purchase it by concessions; but at this crisis, the Prince falling dangerously ill, his danger revived in the old King his natural affection for his former favourite, and he prepared to revoke his last will, and again constitute him heir to the crown. Anxiety, however, had brought on a disease that carried him off, ere he could fulfil his intentions, and Sancho recovered to find himself harassed by the thousand cares attending a disputed succession.

The death of the King opened the eyes of his widow to the error she had committed in favouring the cause of her son, who, it now became evident, considered his weak and fickle mother as a mere tool to ensure the success of his ambitious schemes. Violante was of no farther use to the Prince, who treated her with indifference and neglect. Having joined the party of her third son, Juan, and her grandchildren, who had erected their standard, and agreed to divide the kingdom between them after the death of Sancho, she was foiled in her endeavours by the prudence and firmness of Sancho's widow, the Regent Doña Maria, and in 1295, she had the mortification to see the city of Valladolid close its gates at her approach. This insult greatly incensed her, and she vowed vengeance

on the insolent townsmen; but these threats were idle, as she never had it in her power to execute them. Deprived of the towns and lordships that belonged to her, Violante lived poor and despised, and died at an advanced age, in Roncesvalles, on her return from a pilgrimage to Rome. The date of her death is not recorded.

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## DOÑA MARIA LA GRANDE.

QUEEN CONSORT.

1284.

REIGN OF SANCHO IV., (THE BRAVE.)

DOÑA MARIA ALFONSO DE MOLIÑA, was the daughter, by his third wife, Doña Mayor Alfonso de Meneses, of the Infante Don Alfonso de Moliña, brother of St. Ferdinand. In 1281, Maria was married in Toledo to Sancho, second son of Alfonso the Wise, King of Castile. The Prince had previously been contracted to Doña Guillerma de Moncada, daughter of Gaston, Viscount of Bearne, niece of Don Lopez de Haro, and the richest heiress of Castile, though as deficient in beauty as in temper. Fortunately, both for the domestic happiness of Sancho, and the welfare of the nation, the match was broken off, and a lady chosen who seemed designedly endowed by a kind Providence, with the qualities that so eminently fitted her for the high post she was to fill. The marriage was not, however, in accordance with the canons of the Church, and, though a dispensation was solicited from the Pope, it

was not granted till after the death of Sancho. In 1282, Sancho having rebelled against his father, was so successful, that the assembled Cortes in Valladolid declared in his favour, but he refused the title of King during the life of Don Alfonso, to whom he left the empty name, while he himself exercised the authority of a sovereign. In 1283, Maria gave birth to a daughter, to whom was given the name of Isabel, and who was subsequently betrothed to James II., of Aragon. On the death of Alfonso, which took place in Seville, on the 4th of April, 1284, Sancho and Maria were crowned, in Toledo, sovereigns of Castile, and their daughter proclaimed heiress to the crown.

Previous to the accession of Sancho to the throne, Martin IV., who then occupied the papal chair, had, influenced by the King of France, who was desirous that his sister should marry the Castilian Prince, ordered the latter to separate from his wife; but this Sancho peremptorily refused to do, and the Abbot of Valladolid, who had been the medium of the proposal of the French King, was never forgiven by Maria for the active part which he had taken in the negotiation.

In 1285, the Queen gave birth to a son, who was named Fernando, and sworn heir, and in the following year to another, who was named Alfonso, and who died in 1291. Though the strongest of all ties united the royal pair, and seemed to ensure the duration of Sancho's affection for his Queen, it was, for a time, materially affected by the intrigues of Don Lopez de Haro. This noble had, during the troubles of the preceding reign, sided with the Prince against the King; and by aiding and abetting him in his rebellion, had acquired great influence over him, which he now used to endeavour to effect a separation between him

and the Queen. This end obtained, the ambitious favourite had no doubt but that the King would be easily induced to marry Doña Guillerma, and thus firmly consolidate the power of the great house of Haro.

Though sorely tried, the Queen opposed an unalterable patience and sweetness of temper to the insolent encroachments of the foe of her domestic peace, though he neglected no occasion of irritating her. Doña Maria Fernandez Coronel, to whom the Queen was much attached, who had been her governess, and who was then acting in the same capacity to the Infanta Isabel, was, through the influence of Don Lopez, dismissed from court. But the efforts of the favourite failed to create any permanent ill-feeling between the sovereigns, the Queen foiling all his schemes. The ascendancy of Don Lopez over the King, and his imprudent and overbearing conduct at length roused the anger of many of the nobles, and their complaints, backed by the advice of his nephew, the King of Portugal, at length opening the eyes of Sancho, he endeavoured to remedy the evil, and restrict the sway of the Lord of Biscay. This, however, was not easily to be accomplished. The powerful noble was supported by a strong party, and could count among his adherents, members of the royal family, Don Juan, the King's brother, having married the daughter of Don Lopez, who had himself married the Queen's sister.

Relying on his powerful connections, the favourite replied with insolence to the King's demands; and words growing high, Don Lopez and his son-in-law forgot themselves so far as to draw their swords on their sovereign. In the scuffle that ensued, two of the King's attendants having been desperately wounded by Don Lopez, the

hand of the latter was cut off, and he was finally despatched. The Infante himself took refuge in the Queen's apartment, whither he was pursued by the King, who would have slain him on the instant, had not the Queen interposed to appease his just anger. Don Juan, however, was heavily ironed and thrown into prison, from whence he was released shortly afterwards through the intercession of Doña Maria. Although the King immediately besieged and took the town of Haro and the castles belonging to Don Lopez, he commissioned Doña Juana, widow of the deceased, who was then with her sister the Queen, to endeavour to pacify her son, the new lord, offering to extend his favour to him, and to reinstate him in his father's possessions.

Though Doña Juana promised to second the King's wishes, she was no sooner out of his power, than she used all her influence to incite her son to revenge his father's death. No arguments were necessary to inflame the hot-headed Don Diego, who, having first taken measures to secure the safety of his sister Doña Maria Diaz de Haro, wife of the imprisoned Infante, by removing her to Navarre, renounced his allegiance, and passed over into Aragon. There, Don Diego, being joined by his uncle, Gaston, Viscount of Bearne, the King of Aragon agreed to unite with them in supporting the claims of the Infantes de la Cerda, and these Princes having been released from the castle of Xativa, after a captivity of ten years, Don Alfonso, the eldest, was crowned King of Castile, in the town of Jaen, in September, of the year 1288. Though the death of Don Diego, the only son of Don Lopez, within a year of his father's death, was a severe blow to the party of the Infantes de la Cerda, the great house of

Haro being now without a head, yet this did not benefit Don Sancho, for the uncle of the late Lord passed into Aragon with all his followers to join the opposite side. The Queen, by her tact and prudence, was of the greatest use to Don Sancho in this emergency, her winning manners conciliating many who would otherwise have gone over to the La Cerdas. Among others, she won to her husband's party one of the most powerful of the rebels, Don Juan Nuñez de Lara, to whose son she gave a royal bride, in the person of Doña Isabel de Molina, her own niece, and Lady of the lordship of Molina. The fidelity of Don Juan Nuñez was, however, of short duration, and his frequent rebellions were a source of annoyance to Maria throughout her whole life. In 1291, Don Jayme II. having succeeded his brother Alfonso on the throne of Aragon, Don Sancho concluded a treaty with him, the terms of which were that James should be betrothed to the Infanta Isabel, then nine years old, and marry her as soon as she came of age. The Queen accompanied her daughter to Calatayud, where the ceremonies of betrothal took place, after which, the young Princess proceeded with her bridegroom to the court of Aragon, that she might be educated in the kingdom of which it was intended she should one day be Queen. Don Juan, though he had, on recovering his freedom, taken the oath of fidelity to his brother and the young heir to the crown, soon joined the rebels. Being defeated by the King's troops shortly after, he took refuge in Portugal, from whence being expelled at the request of Sancho, he passed over to Tangiers, where he formed an alliance with Aben Jusef, King of the Moors, the latter furnishing him with 5,000 men to undertake the conquest of Tarifa.

This place was defended by Don Alfonso Guzman,* whose constant loyalty fully entitled him to the surname of the Good, bestowed on him by the King. A young son of Don Alfonso having fallen into the hands of the besiegers, the Infante sent word to the father that the surrender of the town would be the ransom of his child; whose life would be the penalty of his refusal to comply with the terms offered. Don Alfonso, himself, answered from the walls, that the town belonged to his master, and and that so far from seeking to redeem his child's life at the expense of his honour, he would furnish them with the means of executing their threat. So saying, he threw his own sword to the besiegers, and retired from the walls.

The Infante, Don Juan, enraged at the firm refusal of the brave Alfonso, with a barbarity better beseeming the chieftain of a horde of savages than a Christian knight, immediately ordered the head of his innocent prisoner to be struck off in sight of the besieged. The outcries of the beholders of this savage deed being overheard by the Governor, who was at dinner with his wife, Doña Maria Coronel, he caught up his arms and rushed out, demanding the meaning of the noise. Being told what had occurred, he calmly replied, *"You alarmed me, I supposed the enemy had obtained entrance."* He then returned to his meal, carefully abstaining from imparting the sad news to his wife. The truth of this anecdote is too well authenticated to admit of a doubt, incredible as it may appear.

The strength of the town and the bravery of its com-

* Alfonso Perez de Guzman was a noble and brave knight, from whom is descended the ducal family of Medina Sidonia.—Ed.

mander precluding all hope of taking it, the enemy raised the siege and returned to Africa. The kingdom was in the utmost confusion; the nobles perpetually revolting, and fighting now on one side, now on another; and the King, though brave, active, and resolute, assisted moreover by his indefatigable and spirited consort, was unable to extinguish the torch of civil war that blazed from one extremity to the other of the distracted land.

His death, which took place in 1395, on the 25th of April, made matters still worse, the heir to the disputed throne being a boy in his tenth year. Don Sancho left the regency to his Queen, and truly no better pilot could have been chosen to guide the tempest-tossed bark through the wild waves of anarchy that threatened to overwhelm it. The memory of Sancho bears the stain of the cold-blooded murder of 4,000 inhabitants of Badajoz, slain after they had surrendered on the promise that their lives should be spared. Much allowance must be made, however, for the state of irritation in which he was kept by the constant revolts of his turbulent subjects. His apparently ungrateful conduct to his father, may be excused, in part, by the total incapacity for governing of that monarch, and his irresolute and fickle temper.

# DOÑA MARIA LA GRANDE.

## (DOWAGER QUEEN-REGENT).

## 1295.

### REIGN OF FERDINAND IV. (THE SUMMONED.)

THE difficulty of the Queen-Regent's situation brought to light the powers of her strong intellect, and her conduct during the agitated reign of two minors falsifies the assertion of those who maintain that woman is inferior to man in all that requires depth to plan and firmness to execute. No sovereign was ever called to contend with greater evils than those which on every side beset the widowed Queen, who, though distracted with grief for the loss of a fondly-loved husband, was forced to exert all her energy for the preservation of her boy's tottering throne.

Her first act was one of generous policy. To endear the new Prince to his people, the Queen ordered a tax called *sifa*, that had been imposed by Sancho for the expenses of the war, to be annulled. She also confirmed to each province its *fueros*. This conduct was well calculated to please the nation, and the young heir was accordingly joyfully acknowledged. But the ambition of the numerous pretenders to the crown offered little prospect of peace. News soon came that Don Juan was coming from Granada, at the head of a large body of Moorish troops, to claim the throne of Castile.

Don Diego Lopez de Haro, brother and uncle of the two last heads of that house, now entered from Aragon, with an armed force to recover Biscay, which had been

given in charge to Don Enrique, uncle of the late King: and the house of Lara, which hitherto had adhered to the Queen's party, jealous of Don Enrique, next joined against her, with their former enemies, the Haros. The Infante Don Enrique, whose restless, discontented spirit twenty-six years' imprisonment in Italy had not sufficed to subdue, sought to create ill feelings in the people towards the Queen, whose popularity he envied, and claimed the guardianship of the young King, and the regency of the kingdom. The Laras and Haros, whose power rivalled that of the sovereign, upheld the claims of the Infante de la Cerda. Without a friend to stand by her, Maria was forced, for a season, to bow to the storm, and offered to resign the regency to Don Enrique, though the King's person she absolutely refused to entrust to him. She hoped, by thus apparently giving up to the Infante the high and troublesome post he coveted, to bribe him to defend his grand-nephew's rights, while she herself, though resigning the title, in reality retained the influence and authority vested in it.

Having convened the Cortes in Valladolid, in order to have the young King sworn, she employed every argument to gain the goodwill and assistance of the cities. Reminding the deputies of what had been done by those towns for Saint Ferdinand, the ancestor of the present monarch, and of the benefits that had accrued to the nation from the loyalty they had then manifested, she represented in glowing colours those that would ensue, from their pursuing in the present case a similar line of conduct. She depicted the shame and disgrace that would fall on them, should they prove themselves to have degenerated from their forefathers, the wretchedness and anarchy that would follow their defection, and ended by

promising to maintain inviolate their *fueros*, and grant them in addition those that should be deemed necessary, as far as might lay in her power. Her impassioned eloquence was efficacious; the deputies unhesitatingly took the oath of allegiance, and assured the Queen of their readiness to support her son's rights against all pretenders to the crown.

Nor were the Queen's promises hastily made and as soon forgotten. No sooner had the oaths of fealty been taken, than each deputy in turn was admitted to her presence, and the grievances of which they complained listened to patiently, and redressed speedily, her prudence, discernment, and affability, charming her hearers. Her zeal for the public welfare was so untiring, that she frequently remained engaged in affairs of state from an early hour in the morning until three in the afternoon, without allowing herself time to dine. Surrounded by powerful enemies, lukewarm friends, and faithless adherents, the life of this remarkable woman was one of continual anxiety and harassing cares, and presents examples of policy, prudence, perseverance, and decision, that would do credit to the most consummate statesman of any age. The Queen's next step was to bring over to her side the King of Portugal, who, solicited by the Infante, Don Juan, had promised him his aid, and was actually invading the frontiers of Castile in his favour.*

* One of the methods by which Don Juan secured the alliance and co-operation of the Portuguese sovereign, was as base as it was unjust. He asserted the illegitimacy of the young King, founding this scandal upon the refusal of the Pope to sanction the union of his parents; although such a circumstance had never, on any previous occasion, been held to affect the rightful claim of the issue of these by no means unfrequent marriages.—Ed.

Maria and her son having had an interview in Ciudad Rodrigo with the Portuguese monarch, it was agreed that the Infanta of Portugal, Doña Constanza, should marry the young sovereign of Castile, her father engaging to abandon the cause of Don Juan, and the Queen to give up the towns of Serpa, Moura, and Moron. At this time also the marriage contract between James II., of Aragon, and the Infanta Isabel was annulled, the Pope having refused to grant a dispensation; and the Princess returning to Castile, was subsequently married to John III., Duke of Brittany. Doña Maria now repaired to Burgos to conciliate Don Juan Nuñez, Don Nuño Gonzalo, and Don Diego de Haro, and though successful in the end, was forced to concede much more to their exorbitant demands than she would have done under other circumstances. But Don Juan was not of a nature long to remain quiet, and leaguing with Don Alfonso de la Cerda, they agreed to divide the kingdom between them. To Don Alfonso was allotted Castile proper, Toledo, Cordova, Murcia, and Jaen; and to Don Juan, Leon, Galicia, Estremadura, Seville, and the remainder. The league was joined by the Kings of Aragon, Portugal, Granada, the widowed Queen Violante, mother of Don Juan and grandmother of Don Alfonso, and also by Philip, King of France and Navarre. The whole kingdom was distracted by the contending factions, the different parties possessing themselves of the towns and fortresses, and the King himself with difficulty obtaining admittance into the cities of his own dominions.

Don Juan, under pretence of offering to their deliberation important matters, convened the Cortes in Valencia. The Queen, clearly perceiving his object, but unable to prevent the meeting of the assembly, with her usual

prudence determined to turn the enemy's plan to her own advantage, and immediately dispatched letters to each town, giving them information of the Infante's designs, requesting such deputies might be sent as she could rely on, and naming each individual. Not thinking this sufficient, as she was advised that Doña Violante, her son Don Juan, her grandson Don Alfonso, and Don Juan Nuñez intended being present, and fearful lest their persuasions, in her absence, might influence the deputies, she sent for some of the chief inhabitants of the town, and persuaded them to admit within their gates none but the deputies, to the exclusion of the Infantes, nobles, and gentlemen. Neglecting no means that could advance her son's cause, the indefatigable Queen, from Valladolid, where she resided, daily sent posts to the deputies, reminding them of their promises, exhorting them to seek the welfare of the nation, and warning them against placing any confidence in the fallacious promises of Don Juan. Nor were these precautions superfluous, the intriguing Infante having by dint of solicitations, and on condition of immediately withdrawing, obtained admittance into the town. But his efforts were unavailing; the deputies remained firm in the Queen's cause, and a large sum of money was voted to her for the expenses of the war. The city of Segovia having revolted, the Queen, fearing lest the example should prove contagious, determined to bring it back to its allegiance. Having made her way through a body of two thousand armed foes, she arrived at the gates only to be mortified by being refused an entrance, and when finally admitted, it was entirely alone, the King himself being excluded.

Surrounded by a mutinous soldiery, whose equally insolent and rebellious officers were little disposed to treat

her with the respect due to her rank or her sex, the Queen preserving her presence of mind, calm and undaunted, so won by her firm demeanour and persuasive eloquence on their turbulent spirits, that they not only allowed the King to enter, but voted to the Queen a large sum of money, to defray the expenses of the war. Maria immediately taking advantage of this propitious moment, when, excited by momentary enthusiasm, the sordid feeling of self-interest was exchanged for the nobler one of the love of King and Commonwealth, exacted and obtained that the money should then and there be placed in her hands. The Aragonians and Navarrese, commanded by Don Alfonso de la Cerda, had now entered the territories of Castile, and advanced as far as the city of Leon, committing great depredations on their way, and there the Infante Don Juan was proclaimed King of Leon, as had been previously agreed on, the Infante Don Alfonso receiving in Sahagun the title of King of Castile. They continued to gain several places, but were baffled at Mayorga, from which place they were compelled to retire after having besieged it three months.

Amid these contending parties, the Queen, unbiassed by any considerations of self-interest, was the only one who had at heart the welfare of the nation. Ever anxious to unite the powerful barons in one common bond, for the support of her boy's menaced rights, she vainly endeavoured to induce the old Infante Don Enrique to make head against the enemy; but, though invested for that purpose by the Queen with full powers, he contented himself with maintaining a strict neutrality. In reality, the old man, seditious, moody, and discontented by nature, seemed to delight in sowing discord, and was no friend to the young King. Selfish and

avaricious, he incessantly sought to advance his own interests, careless of those of any other. In the meanwhile, the King of Aragon possessed himself of Murcia, and the King of Granada overran Andalusia, receiving, however, a great check from the stout resistance opposed to his depredations by the brave Don Alfonso de Guzman. The King of Portugal, in contempt of the treaty of Ciudad Rodrigo, advanced to the assistance of Don Juan. In order to stay the torrent, Don Enrique, at this crisis, advised the Queen to secure a powerful ally by marrying the Infante Don Pedro, brother of the King of Aragon, the latter offering, in case she did so, to withdraw his troops from her dominions. Though Don Enrique quoted numberless examples of young and royal widows who had married again, the Queen, who was devoted to the memory of her husband, indignantly rejected the idea of purchasing peace on such terms, and replied that she trusted God would protect her son's rights, without exacting from her so unworthy a sacrifice.

The Infante Don Enrique, enraged at Maria for scorning his perfidious advice, repaired to the King of Granada, leaving the troops that should have defended Mayorga without a commander, but an unforeseen circumstance occurred that rendered his defection of little moment, and seemed to justify her reliance on heavenly assistance. A plague broke out among the troops of Aragon, that were besieging the town, and raged with such violence that but one *Procer* was left alive, Don Pedro of Aragon being among the victims. The Aragonians were forced to beg a truce of the Queen in order to convey home the bodies of the lords and knights who had fallen a prey to the distemper. This request was immediately granted, and Maria being informed that the

mortality had been so great that they were destitute of the means of furnishing the coffins suitable to the rank of the deceased, with the generosity that characterized her, sent rich brocades and stuffs to be used for that purpose.

Though now freed from immediate fears of the Aragonians, numerous enemies remained. The King of Portugal, who had been called to their assistance by the besiegers of Mayorga, and was moreover anxious to secure his share of the spoils, was advancing rapidly. But the well-concerted measures of the Queen, who, by keeping her troops well paid and clothed, encouraged them to oppose a stout resistance, rendering the reduction of that place a matter of time and difficulty, the enemy determined to besiege the Queen herself in Valladolid. With a view of securing the fidelity of some of the chief towns, she had confided to the loyalty of each the person of one of the royal children, the young sovereign alone remaining with his mother. The Queen's adherents were unwilling that she should remain exposed to the risk of being taken with the city, and wished her to remove to a stronger place, but though she consented that her son should do so, she refused to fly, resolving to remain and defend the town in person. The nobles, however, not deeming it advisable that the King should be separated from his mother, both remained.

Maria was desirous, by a bold defence of this city, to infuse confidence into others, and was fearful lest, should her presence be wanting, her troops might become discouraged and give it up to the foe. Having sent to Don Juan Alfonso de Haro, to request he would come and assist her in the defence, that chief replied he would do so, if she would grant him the lordship of Cameros; and his

services being of the utmost importance, the condition was accepted. The King of Portugal, Don Juan, and Don Alfonso de la Cerda, styling themselves Kings of Castile and Leon, and Don Juan Nuñez, having joined their forces, now marched on Valladolid, in the firm belief that both King and Queen were in their power; but the want of unity between the confederates, each being anxious to secure to himself advantages which he was unwilling that his allies should share, and the innate spirit of affectionate loyalty that lay dormant but not wholly extinguished in the hearts of the Castilian chiefs, conspired as usual to defeat the purposes of Maria's powerful foes. When within sight of the town, the King of Portugal dispatched a messenger to the Queen, desiring she would send a person in whom she could trust, with powers to treat with him. Though reduced to such straits as to render any proposal of arrangement grateful to her, the Queen's proud spirit disdained to bend to her false friend, and she returned an indignant refusal to send an ambassador, at the same time boldly upbraiding him, through his own messenger, with his infamous rupture of the treaty so recently made in Ciudad Rodrigo, in thus ravaging her dominions after she had fulfilled her promises, and delivered into his hands the towns for which he had stipulated. "Tell your master," she added, "that if he once brings his army within sight of these walls, never shall the King, my son, marry his daughter."

At this crisis, a proposal was made by a man to the King of Portugal, offering to put in his possession some towns on the frontiers; and Don Juan Nuñez, having declared he would not raise his arm against the King, or besiege the city while it held within its walls the sovereign, the Portuguese monarch, fearing the other nobles and

gentlemen would come to the same conclusion, and awed by the determined spirit of the Queen, decided not to come to open hostilities at that time, and accordingly withdrew his troops. Thus did the formidable coalition, that had threatened to prove so fatal to the widowed Queen and her boy, dissolve without striking a blow. Maria, emboldened by the indecision of her foes, resolved now to turn aggressor herself, and drive from the territories of Leon the *soi-disant* King, her brother-in-law, Don Juan. Her military advisers deemed it expedient to besiege Paredes, then the residence of Maria de Haro, the wife of Don Juan, and of Doña Juana, his mother, the Queen repaired thither in person at the head of her troops. Here she was attacked by illness occasioned by a tumour in her arm, from which she suffered intense pain for the space of ten weeks. But nothing could make her neglect the charge she had undertaken: and surmounting her sufferings, she continued to direct in person the operations of the siege. Her quick tact and superior judgment, detecting the weak points of the enemy's defence, repeatedly put to shame the veteran warriors who accompanied her, and her perseverance and ardour were indispensable to an army, whose military commanders were at best but lukewarm. No obstacles could abate her zeal or damp her courage. When money was wanted, rather than burthen the people and thus render her cause odious, she mortgaged her own estates, and, when this resource failed, she raised money by the sale of her plate and jewels.

But the efforts of this heroic woman were rendered ineffectual, when she was on the eve of success, by the envious disposition of Don Enrique, who, as already related, had retired to Granada. Informed that the Queen would,

in all probability, take the town, though it was defended by forces, far outnumbering her own, and fearful lest this exploit, by leading to comparisons rather disadvantageous to one who so recently had allowed himself to be defeated by the Moors, might eventually deprive him of the nominal honours of a regency, the duties of which were so well performed by a woman, the weak-minded dotard determined to counteract her measures and assist her foes. Having repaired to Paredes, under the guise of a friend and ally, he so intrigued with the besieging troops, that the Queen had the mortification of seeing herself forced by her disaffected soldiers to raise the siege, when the town was on the point of surrendering. His petty jealousy soon induced him to propose to the Cortes assembled in Cuellar, that the town of Tarifa should be given up to the Moors. His specious arguments were, however, foiled, and the loss of this important place prevented, by the spirited remonstrances of the Queen. With a strength of reasoning and energy of expression that carried conviction to the hearts of her hearers, she denounced the measure as one which would brand the actors with ineffaceable shame; and she exposed the folly of thus tamely giving up a place that had been so dearly purchased with the blood of many good and loyal nobles and gentlemen in the reign of her husband, and which was a wall against the encroachments of the Africans. The disappointed Enrique now demanded that Gormaz and Caltañazor should be given to him; and the Queen, willing to make some sacrifice to satisfy his rapacity, acceded to the request, hoping that, on the King's coming of age, he would be forced to give back his ill-acquired possessions.

The King of Portugal now renewed his proposal of

marriage between his daughter Constance and the young Castilian sovereign, and also offered his own son and heir as a husband for the Infanta Beatrix, youngest child of Doña Maria. The latter pressed by numerous and powerful foes, and anxious to procure the assistance of so strong an ally, agreed that Constance, instead of bringing a dower, should receive one, her betrothed husband, Don Fernando, giving to his father-in-law, Olivencia, Conguela, Campo Moya, and San Felices delos Gellegos, that sovereign, in return, obliging himself to bring an army to assist the Queen against Don Juan. Beatrix, who was at the same time betrothed to Don Alfonso, the heir of Portugal, was in her fourth year, and the little bridegroom in his ninth. The betrothals were celebrated in Alcañizas, on the frontiers of Zamora, in 1297. The sovereigns then parted, the Queen being accompanied by Constance, and the King of Portugal by Beatrix.

The want of sincerity of the Portuguese monarch was soon made manifest in his insolent demand that Galicia should be given up to Don Juan, together with the city of Leon and the towns which that Prince had taken from the Queen. The deputies, persuaded by Maria, protested against this dismemberment of the kingdom, and her faithless ally returned to Portugal with his army, hoping that the Queen, thus deprived of his assistance, would be compelled to yield to Don Juan. Matters seemed now irretrievably confused. On one hand was Don Juan aided by Don Juan Nuñez, and on the other Don Alfonso de la Cerda; France threatening to enforce her claim on Navarre and the rights of the King's grandson, Don Alfonso; and many of the nobles abandoning the King's party. Here were indeed difficulties and perils to shake the courage of the stoutest heart, but the indomitable

spirit of this extraordinary woman seemed to rise with each new obstacle, and gather fresh strength with every blow that would have crushed another; and, when her cause seemed most desperate, some unforeseen circumstance would occur to retrieve it. Don Juan Alfonso de Haro now did good service, defeating and taking prisoner the great rebel Don Juan Nuñez, who, having returned from France, whither he had gone to enter into a league with King Philip, was overrunning the bishopric of Calahorra. The capture of this great lord was extremely advantageous to Maria and her son, who thus recovered Lerma, La Mota, Amaya, Palenzuela, Dueñas, and other towns, exacting moreover an oath, that he would not for six years take up arms against King Ferdinand. The defeat of his ally so much disheartened Don Juan, that he came to terms, renouncing the title of King, and acknowledging that of his nephew Ferdinand,* the son of Maria, in June of the year 1300. To Don Juan were given as a compensation, Paredes, Mansilla, Rioseco, Castro Nuño, and Cabreras. The King of Aragon meanwhile, having possessed himself of the town of Lora, the castle was in imminent danger of being also taken by him, if not succoured immediately. Advice of this fact having been brought to the Queen, then in Burgos, on the 1st of January, 1301, she proposed to Don Enrique that he should instantly go to its assistance, as this fortress was the key to Murcia. To her urgent entreaties, Enrique replied with his usual indecision, ever treating with indifference the most important questions, when proposed by her.

This silly conduct so disgusted the Queen, that she

* Don Juan had another nephew of that name, son of his brother, Ferdinand de la Cerda.

declared that she would go in person, and that whosoever chose might follow. Her energy infused some little shame into Enrique, and he prepared to accompany her. The inclemency of the weather did not deter Maria, and she accordingly set out on the 4th of January, and by forced marches managed to reach Alcaraz, only to be mortified with the tidings that the castle had been surrendered by treason. Determined to reap some benefit for the trouble and expense she had incurred, Maria entered Murcia, where she not only succoured several places that were in danger of being taken, but would infallibly have captured the King of Aragon and his Queen, who, unconscious of her proximity, were in Navarre, had not the Infantes Juan and Enrique refused to act in concert with her against this monarch, whose allies they were in secret. Enrique was desirous of securing the regency for his life-time, and for this purpose secretly intrigued with Aragon.

The Pope's dispensation, legalising the Queen's marriage with her late husband and legitimising her children, now arrived from Rome, having been solicited unremittingly by Maria, since the period of Sancho's death. The jealousy of Enrique, inflamed by every circumstance that favoured the Queen, sought to counteract the good effects the Pope's decree was likely to produce, by industriously circulating a report that the letters supposed to have been sent by the Pontiff were forged. Not content with this imposture, Don Enrique consorted with Don Juan Nuñez, to create ill feelings between the young King and his mother, and to withdraw him from her. Maria being obliged to go to Victoria, to meet the governor of that place and settle some disputed points, Ferdinand was

persuaded to express a wish to spend the time of the Queen's absence, in hunting with Don Juan Nuñez.

Too frank and truthful herself to suspect treason in one whose past misdemeanors had been so recently pardoned, the Queen readily consented to her son's being absent with the traitor-noble four days. This imprudence soon occasioned much grief to Maria, the inexperience of the boy-King making him an easy prey to his subtle companion, who represented in the most distorted light the subjection in which he was held, taught him to view the necessary restraint his age warranted as an unworthy yoke: adding that he, the monarch, was but a cipher, poor and despised, while the Queen Regent, the brilliant cynosure of all eyes, would keep him, during her life-time, merely as the instrument of her will.

Ferdinand, who seems to have inherited neither his father's brilliant valour, nor his mother's firmness and prudence, weak, unstable, and prone to every new impression, was easily swayed by the subtle reasoning of his new advisers, whom he accompanied to Leon: and who even persuaded him that whatever might be the ostensible purpose of the Queen's journey to Victoria, the real object of it was the negotiation of a marriage between his sister Isabel and Don Alfonso de la Cerda, whom she intended to assist in his claim on the crown. The simple youth giving the inventors of this preposterous falsehood credit for all the zeal they professed in his behalf, became a mere tool in their hands against his noble mother.

While Doña Maria was in Victoria, she received a message from the King of Aragon, offering to restore all the places he had taken in Murcia, if she would allow him to keep Alicante, but this she absolutely refused. To

remedy, as far as lay in her power, the evils accruing from the King's confidence in his artful counsellors, Maria thought it advisable that his marriage with his betrothed bride should now be celebrated, and accordingly opened a negotiation with the King of Portugal to induce him to give up the towns which had been placed in his hands as pledges that the union should take place.

The Queen was on the point of obtaining her just demand, when her plan was frustrated by the young King's false friends, who, to ingratiate themselves with the King of Portugal, and obtain his co-operation in their schemes, persuaded their dupe to marry immediately, and the nuptials took place, in January, 1302.

Ferdinand, having convened the Cortes to meet in Medina del Campo on the 10th April, the *procuradores* refused to assemble, unless called to do so by the Queen-mother, and, when summoned by her, they sent to her, offering to exclude the King if such were her pleasure. But that Princess was too wise and good to allow of her son's conduct, however ungrateful to her, being made a plea for disrespect to himself, and seeking to repair the mischief which he occasioned, not to revenge the wrongs inflicted on herself, at her son's request attended the Cortes. The deputies were ill pleased that the King should be but a puppet in the hands of Don Juan Nuñez and the Infante Don Juan; and the latter, aware that the deputies would do nothing but what should be in strict accordance with the wishes of the Regent, sought to annoy Maria in all possible ways. By their advice, Ferdinand demanded of the Abbot of Santander, the Queen's Chancellor, an account of the outlays and receipts during her administration; but, instead of ascertaining, as he had been led to expect, that she had secreted large sums, the

strict inquiry which he instituted only served to prove that the King was in debt to his mother, for those she had disbursed from her own funds, in his service.

On another occasion, being informed that, if he inquired for certain valuable rings which had belonged to his father, his mother would be unable to produce them, having bestowed them on some of her creatures, the young King hastened to her apartment and requested that she would show him the jewels. Though aware of the suspicion which prompted the demand, the Queen, dissembling the grief this insult caused her, calmly turning to one of her ladies in waiting, Doña Maria Sanchez, bade her bring them, together with her own, and when they were brought, besought the crestfallen boy to take them *all*, if such were his pleasure.

Ferdinand, after such repeated proofs of his mother's integrity, seemed to repent of his past unkind doubts, and breaking away from his evil advisers, spent some time with his best and most sincere friend. But his weak mind rendered him too prone to bad impressions to allow of his long continuing firm in any wise course, and being persuaded that his mother still cherished the desire of marrying her daughter Isabel to his competitor Don Alfonso de la Cerda, he sent to demand that his sister should come and abide with his wife Constance.

Many nobles, and among them Don Alfonso Lopez de Haro, indignant at the childish and wavering conduct of the King, proposed to Maria that she should deprive him of all power, and offered to join her against him; but she refused to take a course which, though warranted by his mismanagement of public affairs, would ruin him irretrievably. The lords, on her refusal, raised the standard of Don Alfonso de la Cerda. Don Enrique, offended by

Ferdinand, also proposed to Maria that they should unite in resisting his overstrained authority, and had she acceded, the power of Don Enrique was such, and the love the nation bore the Queen was so great, that the King would have been thrust from the throne he so ill became. But, far from giving the proposal a moment's thought, the Queen-mother endeavoured to palliate and excuse his folly on the score of his youth, and sought to reconcile the hearts which he was continually alienating.

Many nobles and gentlemen having gone to the Queen-mother in Valladolid, Ferdinand repaired thither to ascertain their intentions, and Maria, seizing this favourable opportunity of reasoning with him, entreated that he would declare the cause which moved him thus to persecute, misjudge, and insult a mother who had made his happiness and welfare the study of her life, and what could induce him to join with those who had for so long a time proved his most bitter foes. The King, moved by her just and unanswerable remonstrance, manifested some little gratitude for her solicitude and care, but, as usual, no lasting good was produced, and he was easily brought to consider this momentary repentance as a weakness. Don Enrique, Don Diego de Haro, and Don Juan Manual, a grandson of San Fernando, now joined with the Infante Alfonso de la Cerda, who called himself King of Castile, and began to treat with the King of Aragon. This coalition, into which vain efforts were made to draw the Queen-mother, would doubtless have proved fatal to Ferdinand, had not the death of one of its chief members greatly reduced its power.

The Infante Don Enrique ended his turbulent career in August, 1303, at the age of seventy-three and was interred in Valladolid. So little was the personal regard he had

inspired, that not one mourning friend followed his remains to their last resting-place; nor would the body of this, the most powerful and wealthy of Spain's nobles, have been buried with common decency, had not the Queen, whose life he had constantly sought to embitter, provided everything in accordance with his rank, called on the clergy and inhabitants of Valladolid to attend the funeral rites, and herself and her daughter Isabel acted as chief mourners. The numerous towns of which, taking advantage of the troubles of the times, Don Enrique had possessed himself, now, by the prompt measures of María, returned to the crown, she herself recovering Ecija.

The death of Don Enrique greatly contributed to quell the rising storm, and restore peace and tranquillity. The sovereigns of Aragon, Portugal, and Castile, having met in Agreda and Tarragona in August of the following year to settle the claims of Don Alfonso de la Cerda, the royal arbiters decreed, that Prince should renounce his pretensions to the throne of Castile and the title of King, and receive as a compensation, a number of towns and lordships in Castile.

Though the Queen-Mother sorely felt this dismemberment of the dominions of Castile, still she deemed it far preferable to make this sacrifice, costly as it was, than to continue the civil war. The Infante Don Alfonso was as little satisfied, because as the places assigned to him were in different parts of the country, their importance was greatly diminished. But, notwithstanding the dissatisfaction of the parties concerned, they were compelled to abide by the decision of the arbitrators, and great rejoicings took place on the occasion.

The King, now freed from his most powerful enemies, might have enjoyed the sweets of peace had his

temper been different. But his prudent mother was constantly employed in soothing the touchy spirits by whom he was surrounded, and whom he was unsuited to manage. Ferdinand was preparing to make war upon the Moors, who had taken advantage of the discord reigning among the Christians, when his death, which occurred in Jaca, September, 1312, in his twenty-seventh year, again involved the Castilian dominions in the confusion generally attending the minority of Princes. Ferdinand was surnamed *the Summoned,* from the following circumstance. Two brothers, Don Pedro and Don Juan Alfonso Carvajal, were accused of having murdered a gentleman of the name of Benavides, one evening, as he retired from the palace of the King in Valencia. Though they protested their innocence, and the proofs were very slight against them, the King condemned them to be thrown from a rock called *La Peña de Martos.* On their way to the place of execution, the brothers solemnly summoned the King to answer within thirty days, at the tribunal of God, for this his unjust condemnation. Though Ferdinand subsequently suffered a slight indisposition, he had apparently entirely recovered from it some days previous to that appointed by the criminals, or victims; but having thrown himself on his couch on the thirtieth day, with the intention of reposing for an hour, his prolonged sleep alarming his attendants, they ventured to endeavour to rouse him, and found him dead!

Note.—In the following year, Philip, King of France, and Pope Clement, both died, having been summoned in a similar manner by two knights-templars.

# DOÑA MARIA.

## 1312.

### (DOWAGER QUEEN REGENT.)

REIGN OF ALFONSO XII.

On the death of Ferdinand,* the royal standard was raised by his brother, Don Pedro, for the young heir to the crown, Alfonso, then but a year old. The Infante, Don Juan, and Don Juan Nuñez, declared their intention of supporting the claims of Doña Maria to the guardianship of the young Prince, to which they considered her entitled, but insisted that her son, the Infante Don Pedro, should be entirely excluded from all participation in the administration. On the other hand, the Infante Don Pedro and Don Juan Nuñez de Lara were equally imperative in their demands of the same office. The city of Avila, where the young King then was, following the example of loyalty set by its inhabitants during the reign of the ninth Alfonso, decided that neither of the contending parties should have possession of the person of the infant sovereign until their respective

* Notwithstanding the ingratitude which Ferdinand had exhibited towards his mother, he nevertheless appreciated her talents and energy, as he proved by the testamentary document which he left behind him, wherein he constituted her sole guardian of his infant son Alfonso. His habitual jealousy and distrust, however, led him into the fatal error of associating with her in the regency, not only his own brother, Don Pedro, but also the factious and intriguing husband of her sister; a want of judgment and confidence, which, as a natural consequence, at once involved the kingdom in confusion.—Ed.

claims should be settled; and placing him under the protection of an efficient guard, they reared him with the most affectionate solicitude. The wretched kingdom was now again divided by rival factions, the Dowager Queen, though with her usual moderation, favouring the party of her son Pedro, and Constance, widow of Ferdinand, that of the Infante Juan. The Cortes assembled in Valencia, but the *procuradores* were divided in opinion, some being in favour of the Infante Don Juan, and the wiser portion in favour of Doña Maria and her son Pedro.

The town of Avila, after innumerable treaties, negotiations, &c., at length received within its gates Doña Maria and her son as tutors of the baby sovereign, but without permitting him to be taken beyond its precincts. The death of Queen Constance, in 1314, contributed greatly to settle all disputes, and Maria was then allowed to take her grandson to Toro, and there educate him. The subsequent deaths of the Infantes, Don Juan and Don Pedro, while warring with the Moors in 1319, seemed to secure peace to Castile, the undisputed possession of the regency being now in the hands of Maria. But this was rather the prelude to fresh commotions. Don Juan Manuel, grandson of St. Ferdinand, aspired to the guardianship of the young King, and his pretensions were supported by several cities. Don Felipe, a son of Doña Maria, undertaking to punish his arrogance, commenced ravaging the towns that had declared in his favour; but his mother, ever careless of her own interest, and mindful of that of the people, interposed her authority, and caused him to desist. Don Fernando de la Cerda, Don Juan,* son of the late Don Juan, and

* Don Juan, surnamed *the Crooked*, from his physical deformity.—Ed.

of his wife Doña Maria, and Diaz de Haro, were stirring up the disaffected against Don Juan Manuel and the Queen's party. To appease the threatened storm, Maria convoked a Cortes in Valladolid; but, worn out with the cares to which she had been a constant prey during the whole of her well-spent life, exhausted nature gave way. The Queen beheld the approaches of death with the calmness of a Christian, her last earthly thoughts being, as ever, bent on securing peace to the kingdom, and the crown to him whom she considered as its legitimate heir.

Having summoned the regidores and chief gentlemen of the city, she solemnly entrusted her grandson to their loyalty, bidding them guard and keep him, until his majority, and not to allow of his being taken from them under any pretence, by any party, until that period.

Having thus fulfilled her duty to the last, doing all that lay in her power for the good of the nation, she considered her task on earth accomplished, and prepared to receive a crown in heaven, resigning the terrestrial one, which had often been so heavy a weight to her aching brow. Maria died in July, 1321.

The death of this indefatigable woman, whose strong intellect, keen foresight, and disinterested zeal, had so often preserved the kingdom when on the verge of ruin, was lamented throughout the nation. Maria, if we consider the age in which she lived, was truly a prodigy. In her were blended the masculine virtues of the stronger sex, and the mild ones of her own. She united the talents of the experienced politician, and the art of the great general and tactician. The firm support of a tottering throne, yet the conscientious advocate of the rights of the people, neither daunted by reverses, nor elated by prosperity; wise, humane, and pious, amid a host of ambitious,

selfish contenders for power, she alone was unmoved by motives of self-interest, and from the first to the last day of her long and useful career, steadily kept on her undeviating path of rectitude. In the history of nations her name shines with a radiance dimmed by no one blot. Justly surnamed the Great, placed in a situation as perilous as it was exalted, living in times when it was often deemed excusable, if not praiseworthy, to do evil for the sake of effecting good, this Queen has left a memory unstained by crimes, unsullied by foibles.

Besides the children already mentioned, Maria gave birth in 1288 to Enrique, who died in 1299; to Pedro, who, born in 1290, was married in 1311, to Maria, eldest daughter of James II. of Aragon, and died in battle in 1319; to Felipe, who, born in 1292, married Margarita, daughter of Don Alfonso de la Cerda, and died 1327; to Beatrix, born 1293, and betrothed in 1301 to Alfonso of Portugal, to whom she was married in 1309.

## CONSTANZA OF PORTUGAL.

### 1302.

REIGN OF FERDINAND IV., THE SUMMONED.

CONSTANCE, the daughter of Denis, King of Portugal, and of his Queen, Isabel, surnamed the Saint, was born on the 3rd of January, 1290, betrothed in 1297 to Ferdinand, the young King of Castile, and married to him in 1302. The superiority of Maria, the Dowager Queen of Castile, has so completely cast the young reigning

Queen into the shade, that the latter has attracted little or no attention. The only political act in which she took part was when she was sent to endeavour to obtain a loan of money from her father, by her husband Ferdinand, who at the time was besieging Tordehumos. Constance survived the premature death of Ferdinand but a short time, dying in Sahagun, November 18th, 1313, in the twenty-fourth year of her age. It is said that this daughter, wife, sister, and mother of sovereigns, actually suffered the miseries of penury during the latter part of her short existence; it is certain that she died so poor that her jewels were insufficient to defray her debts.

Constance gave birth in 1307 to Leonor, and in 1311 to Alfonso, who succeeded to his father's throne. Leonor was betrothed when four years of age to Pedro, Crown Prince of Aragon, son of James II., but that Prince renouncing the throne and taking orders, Leonor subsequently married his brother Alfonso, in 1329.*

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## CONSTANZA MANUEL.

### 1325.

REIGN OF ALFONSO XII.

On the 13th of August, 1325, Alfonso XII. having attained his fourteenth year, took the government of the kingdom on himself, thus putting a stop to the continual wrangling of his tutors, which had hitherto kept the land

* The events of this reign have been given in the Annals of Maria the Great.

in a state of confusion. Doña Constanza, daughter of Don Juan Manuel, one of the wealthiest heiresses of Castile, had been promised by her father to Don Juan el Tuerto, son of the Infante of the same name, who had created so much disturbance during the preceding reigns. The King, foreseeing the evils likely to arise from a marriage that would cement an alliance between these two ambitious and disaffected barons, offered himself as a suitor to the lady, and the prospect of a throne proving too powerful a bait to be refused, the bretrothals were celebrated in November, 1325. The age of the little maid rendering it necessary that some years must elapse ere the marriage could take place, circumstances intervened in the interval, which rendered Alfonso extremely averse to fulfilling his engagement, though his bride was honoured with the title of Queen.

The restless, discontented temper of Don Juan Manuel could not long endure restraint, and so irritated the King, that, heartily repenting his alliance with the insolent, rebellious noble, he sought, and finally obtained, a separation from his child-bride; and the quarrel with her father having come to an open rupture, Constance was regarded as a hostage rather than a Queen-consort, being kept a close prisoner in Toro, from October, 1327, to September, 1328, when, Alfonso having married the Infanta of Portugal, she was allowed to return to her father. Fate, as though determined to cheat her with the hope of a diadem that was never to crown her brow, once more seemed to favour the designs of the ambitious Juan Manuel, who, in 1340, married his divorced daughter to Pedro, Prince of Portugal, son of Alfonso XI. But the domestic life of Constance, like that of her successor, in the heart and on the throne of the King of Castile, was destined to be em-

bittered by the pangs of a jealousy but too well founded. Shortly after her marriage, it became evident that the beautiful Ines de Castro, one of the Princess's ladies, had inspired Pedro with a vehement passion; a passion which proved stronger than the ties that bound him to his consort, and so enduring, that the subsequent death of its hapless object was insufficient to extinguish it. The King, alarmed at the influence Ines was acquiring over the mind of his son, contrived to place a spiritual bar between the lovers, by causing the lady to stand godmother to Luis, the eldest child of Pedro and Constance. But a man of the Prince's passionate and determined nature was not to be deterred by this obstacle from following his inclination; and his continued indifference to his consort, and devoted attachment to her rival, is said to have preyed on the spirits of the former, and hastened her death, which took place at Santarem, 13th November, 1345. The Queen had given birth to three children, Luis, Maria, and Ferdinand. The last two survived her.

NOTE.—The majority of our readers are doubtless acquainted with the tragic story of Ines de Castro, which has furnished so rich a theme for the poet and the novelist; but those who have not met with it elsewhere, may be gratified to find a sketch of it here, though the incident belongs, more especially after the death of Constance, to the history of Portugal.

The death of Constance freeing the Prince from all restraint, he sought to unite himself to his mistress by indissoluble ties, and for this purpose obtained a dispensation from Rome, when the marriage was secretly solemnized at Braganza, in the presence of a Portuguese prelate and the Prince's own chamberlain, January 1st, 1355. It has been much disputed whether the marriage was performed before or after the birth of the offspring of Ines, who, however, were by this ceremony legitimised. Notwithstanding the precautions taken to ensure secrecy, suspicions were entertained; and the King, alarmed lest the interests of his grandchild Ferdinand should suffer in consequence, sent for the Prince, and urged

him to declare whether there was any truth in the report. Though Pedro was questioned repeatedly on the subject, he persisted in denying his marriage, but when the King remonstrated on the sin of continuing his criminal intercourse with his mistress, he, as positively, refused to give her up. Several alliances with European Princesses were proposed to the Prince, and his refusal to listen to any overtures of the kind, confirmed the King's suspicion that he was already married. Enraged that his son should have allied himself to a subject, and urged by some of his counsellors, who represented that, after his death the Prince would set aside his eldest child's claims in favour of those of the offspring of the woman he so passionately loved, and thus involve the kingdom in the horrors of civil war, the King determined to remove the cause of his annoyance. It seems almost incredible that a man, a Knight, and a King should deliberately meditate and cause to be executed the barbarous, cold-blooded murder of a woman, surrounded by her young children. That he did so, however, is a fact too well authenticated to allow of a doubt. The Queen-Mother and the Archbishop of Braga, having ascertained the King's murderous intentions, apprised Don Pedro of the danger of Ines, but several months elapsing without any attempt being made, Pedro fancying his father had given up the shocking idea, or, as is more probable, unwilling to believe that he had ever conceived it, became less vigilant, and Alfonso's spies at length brought word that the Prince had departed on a hunting expedition, and would be absent some days. The King instantly left Monte Mor, where he then was, and hastened to the convent of Santa Clara, in Coimbra, where Ines resided. On learning the King's approach, the hapless lady, foreseeing her danger, attempted to avert it, and issuing from the gates, attended by her three little ones, embraced his knees, and implored his mercy. Her extreme beauty and youth, her tears and those of his little grandchildren, made some impression on the heart of the sovereign, and he withdrew, irresolute; but the persuasions of his confidential advisers, who happened to be enemies of the Castro family, and jealous of their influence with the Prince, soon caused the dictates of a mistaken policy to prevail over those of nature, and Alfonso ordered the unprotected Ines to be stabbed by his minions, without the mockery of a trial,—for the crime imputed to her of inspiring the Prince's love was too well proved,—without an hour's space to implore the mercy of one whom even these tigers acknowledged the Supreme Judge.* When Pedro,

* The unfortunate Ines de Castro was not assassinated at the convent of Santa Clara, but at a *quinta*, or villa, situated almost immediately

on his return from the chase, beheld the bloody corpse of the only woman he had ever loved, his rage knew no bounds, and the burning thirst for revenge mastered his grief. Assembling all his adherents, among whom were the members of the powerful house of Castro, he ravaged the provinces of Entre Douro e Minho, and Tras os Montes, where the possessions of his wife's murderers lay, and besieged Oporto. The King, alarmed at the progress of his son's arms, sent the Queen to conciliate him, but in vain; Pedro received his mother kindly, but swore that he would never lay down his arms until the perpetrators of the deed were given into his power. The King could not give up those who, though they had advised the act, had yet only executed it by his orders, and a compromise was finally agreed on. The obnoxious nobles were banished, and the Prince admitted to participate in the administration of the government. The death of Alfonso soon followed this reconciliation, and is said to have been accelerated by the pangs of remorse for the cruelty of which he had been guilty. Pedro was no sooner King than he set about gratifying his long-cherished desire for vengeance. Having by dint of negotiation obtained the persons of two out of the three assassins from his namesake, the King of Castile, at whose court they had taken refuge, and who gave them up in exchange for some of his own personal enemies and rebellious subjects in Portugal, Pedro exercised all his ingenuity to devise tortures for these wretches.

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beneath it, upon the bank of the river Mondego, now known as the *Quinta das Lagrimas*, or the Villa of Tears, to which her murderers gained access, on the pretext of a message from the Prince. At the moment of their arrival she was seated with her children on the margin of a fountain, fed by a spring in the rock which overhung the grounds, and under the shade of two lofty cedar trees. As their errand was announced to her, she eagerly sprang up to demand their tidings, when she was instantly struck down by the assassins, who left her with her head lying across the marble border of the basin; where she was discovered by her attendants, with her long hair floating upon the surface of the water, which was dyed with her blood. Until the late revolution, this spot, rendered historical by the fatal tragedy of which it had been the theatre, remained precisely in the same condition as at the period of her murder; the piety of her life, the gentle urbanity of her bearing, and her exhaustless charity, having so deeply endeared her to all ranks, that any change effected in the place, would have been considered a sacrilege. —Ed.

To detail the torment they were made to undergo would be harrowing to the feelings of the reader; suffice it to say, that they seemed the invention of a fiend rather than of a man. Indeed the temper of Pedro became, from the death of Ines, stern, harsh, and inflexible in the extreme, and though he has been celebrated for his impartial and strict administration of justice during his reign, that justice was never tempered with mercy, and he even seemed to take a ferocious pleasure in witnessing the inflictions of the cruel punishments to which he sentenced malefactors. Mrs. Hemans, in her beautiful ballad of the Coronation of Ines de Castro, has given a description of the regal honours the heart-stricken sovereign bestowed on his murdered wife, whom he caused to be disinterred, clad in royal robes, and solemnly crowned in the cathedral of Coimbra, after which the corpse was conveyed, attended by a procession of the most noble ladies and menof the highest rank, clad in mourning, to the monastery of Alcobaça, and deposited in the magnificent tomb which he had prepared for that purpose.[a]

[a] The two magnificent sarcophagi, containing the bodies of Ines and her royal consort occupied a small chapel, enclosed by a screen of richly-wrought and gilded iron, in the right aisle of the splendid chapel. The gates were forced by the French during the Peninsular war, and the tombs rifled; during which sacrilegeous process the illustrious dead were torn from their resting-place and flung upon the pavement. Three of the community (of whom the Prior was one), instead of flying, had concealed themselves within the sacred edifice, and were enabled to witness, from the place of their retreat, the brutal violence of the invaders. On my visit to Alcobaça, in 1827, I made the acquaintance of the Prior, whose community had once more rallied about him, and who solemnly assured me, that although the body of the Prince had entirely perished, leaving nothing but a mere skeleton clad in its regal robes, that of Ines remained perfect, her beautiful face entirely unchanged, and her magnificent hair, of a light, lustrous auburn, which had been the marvel of the whole nation during her life, so enriched in length and volume, that it covered her whole figure, even to her feet, and excited the wonder and admiration of the very spoilers who tore away the rich jewels by which her death-garments were clasped.—Ed.

# DOÑA MARIA DE PORTUGAL.

REIGN OF ALFONSO XII.

## 1328.

THE King of Portugal had long been anxious to effect the marriage of his daughter Maria with the young King of Castile, and therefore saw with no little pleasure the breach between Alfonso and his father-in-law daily widening. Aware that the union with Constance had not been consummated, he renewed his proposals, and these were so advantageous to Castile, that Alfonso, wearied with his insolent subject's continued disobedience, accepted them. Among other conditions, it was agreed that the Crown Prince of Portugal should marry Blanche, daughter and heiress of Don Pedro,* Lord of Cameros, and that her hereditary domains should be given to her cousin, the King of Castile; the King of Portugal obliging himself to indemnify her for the loss, by settling upon her domains of equal value in Portugal. This condition was extremely advantageous to the King of Castile, as it not only ensured a splendid alliance to his cousin Blanche, but added to the domains of the crown the vast estates of his uncle, Don Pedro, which in the hands of another lord, might have proved too dangerous a resource for a subject.

The marriage between Alfonso XII. King of Castile,

* The Infante Don Pedro, who had been co-Regent with Doña Maria the Great, and was killed in the Plain of Granada, fighting against the Moors.

and Maria, daughter of Alfonso IV. King of Portugal, and his consort, Beatrix of Castile, was solemnized in September of the year 1328. Though a dispensation had not been procured previous to the marriage, it was readily granted in the following year by the Pope. These nuptials were followed by those of Blanche with the Prince of Portugal, and Leonor, Infanta of Castile, sister of Alfonso, with the King of Aragon, Alfonso IV. The union of Maria and Alfonso, like the generality of those formed from motives of policy, where the feelings of the parties chiefly concerned have been totally disregarded, proved extremely unhappy. The King's anxious hopes of an heir seemed to be doomed to disappointment, the Queen remaining childless during the first three years of her marriage; and his amours with Doña Leonor de Guzman, of which he made no secret, concurring to mortify and grieve Maria, a fountain was unsealed, whose poisoned waters were to embitter the whole current of her life. To add to the Queen's vexation, the favourite gave birth to a numerous family, thus strengthening the ties that united the King to her.

This high-born dame, whose long term of prosperity and tragical end have concurred, doubtless, as much as her being the mother of a Prince who subsequently ascended the throne, to give her a conspicuous place in history, was the daughter of Don Pedro Nuñez de Guzman, and the widow of Don Juan de Velasco. By birth and alliance, Leonor was of the richest and noblest families in Spain, and unanimously allowed to be the most beautiful woman in the kingdom, while even her enemies pronounced her intellect equal to her beauty. The King saw her for the first time in Seville, in 1330, and the impression her matchless charms made was

indelible, her wit and amiability strengthening and maintaining the monarch's passion for the space of twenty years. During this long period, Leonor was, if not *de jure*, at least *de facto*, the Queen of Castile, the neglected Maria possessing but an empty title, while all the authority was vested in the fascinating mistress.

But though enjoying unbounded power during the King's life, Leonor used it with prudence and moderation, making it the study of her life to promote her royal lover's happiness, sharing in his joys and triumphs, and by her gentle sympathy, soothing and dispelling the cares and vexations that assailed him. All the historians of those times have united to do homage to the charms of mind and person of Alfonso's mistress, albeit his passion for her was the occasion of the domestic sorrows of his consort, and the origin of the long and desolating civil wars that distracted Castile during the subsequent reign of his son Pedro.

The birth, in 1330, of the first son of Leonor, was hailed with delight by the King, and celebrated with great rejoicings by many of the courtiers, who, foreseeing the important part the mother would enact, sought to ingratiate themselves with the King, by flattering the object of his passion. Alfonso endowed this, his first-born son, richly; and the fame of the influence of Leonor spreading far and wide, the powerful rebel Don Juan Manuel sent to solicit her good offices to effect a reconciliation with the King. The messengers of the crafty Baron were also empowered to negotiate a secret treaty with Leonor, and to offer her the assistance of their master if she would induce the King to obtain a divorce from his sterile and unloved Queen, and marry her who had already given him a male heir. Don Manuel offered, in case she would do so, to

return to his allegiance, and employ all his power to further her plans. Leonor had too much sense not to perceive the hidden drift of the traitorous noble, who, to obtain his own ends, sought to weaken the sovereign by involving him in a war with Portugal, and to create, moreover, great disturbances in the kingdom. She, therefore, not only resolutely refused these specious offers, but requested that the King might never be spoken to upon the subject. Though she would not accede to his treacherous proposals, Leonor wisely endeavoured to bring about a reconciliation between Alfonso and his great vassal.

To the accomplished favourite was also due the creation of the Order of La Banda. To be admitted a member of this Order, it was necessary to prove a term of service of not less than ten years, and an unblemished and noble birth. A crimson band worn over the right shoulder was the insignia. The King himself was the Grand Master, and it was instituted with a view of refining and polishing the manners of the nobles, who, from a long continuance of civil wars, had become rude and ferocious. It was governed by many excellent laws and regulations, and became so celebrated that to be one of its members was accounted one of the highest honours.

The neglected Queen was somewhat consoled by the birth, in 1332, of Fernando, her first-born. This event was celebrated with great pomp. Leonor, about the same period, also gave birth to a son, who was named Sancho. A few months previous to the Queen's confinement, the coronation of the sovereigns of Castile had taken place, and on this occasion was revived the ancient ceremony of the King knighting all those who were entitled to the honour. This ceremony, which had always been used at

the coronation of the sovereigns of Spain, had fallen into desuetude during the agitated reigns of his two immediate predecessors, and was now restored by Alfonso in all its original splendour.

The King of Portugal, incensed at the insult offered to his daughter in the publicity of Alfonso's passion for his mistress, now confederated with the restless Don Juan Manuel and Don Juan Nuñez de Lara to obtain by force of arms the dismissal of the cause of offence. The Infante of Portugal repudiated his wife, Blanche of Castile, her infirmities (she was paralytic) affording a sufficient plea, and married Constanza, the daughter of Don Juan Manuel, and the repudiated bride of the Castilian sovereign. The energy with which Alfonso attacked his rebel lords, and especially Don Juan Nuñez, whom he besieged in Lerma, and compelled to come to terms, soon reduced them to a temporary submission, and allowed him time to turn his attention to the inroads of the Moors, who were coming from Africa in great numbers.

The King of Granada, anxious to free himself from the tribute Alfonso exacted from him, solicited the assistance of the King of Morocco, and their united forces would have undoubtedly proved fatal to the sovereign of Castile, had he not taken efficacious measures to oppose them. The Court having removed to Seville, to be nearer the seat of war, Doña Leonor there gave birth to the twins who were destined to enact so important a part in the succeeding reign—Don Fadrique, Grand Master of Santiago, who was to perish by the dagger of his half-brother, Don Pedro; and Don Enrique, the first-born, who was to avenge his twin-brother's death by the assassination of Pedro and the usurpation of his crown. The joy afforded to the Queen by the birth of her own son was of short

duration, the young Prince dying in 1333, but in November of the following year her hopes were revived by the birth of another son, who was named Pedro, and was destined to succeed his father. Some authors assert that Leonor endeavoured, at the time of the Queen's confinement, to cause the death of both mother and son, for which purpose she had recourse to sorcery, but this ridiculous imputation is as stoutly denied by others. The character of Leonor was tainted with neither cruelty nor ambition, though she is by some accused of having caused the downfall of Martin de Oviedo, Grand Master of Alcantara, who, irritated against the favourite, rebelled, was taken, and expiated his crime by a cruel death.

It being indispensable that the Christian powers of the Peninsula should unite to repel the numerous forces of the allied Moors, Maria setting aside all resentment for private wrongs, in her anxiety for the public weal, repaired to Ebora, a town of Portugal, to solicit in person the assistance of her father against the common foe to Christianity. The Portuguese monarch, won by his daughter's persuasions, joined Alfonso at the head of a considerable force, and the united sovereigns having encountered the Moors near Tarifa, which the latter were besieging, won the famous battle of El Salado, so called from the little river of that name, on the banks of which it was fought on the 28th October, 1340. The Moors were in immense numbers, and commanded by the King of Granada and Albohacen, Prince of Morocco.

This was the greatest battle that had taken place since that of Las Navas de Tolosa, when Alfonso VIII. and his allies, the Kings of Navarre and Leon, humbled the crescent to the dust. That the Christians at the battle of El Salado performed miracles of valour can scarcely be

doubted, when we find they triumphed over forces four times as numerous as their own. The more moderate Spanish historians reckon their number at 60,000, and that of the Moors at 140,000. This certainly appears incredible, and what is still more so, is the assertion that 12,000 Moors fell on the field of battle, while the loss of the Christians amounted to some twenty men.* Though we can give no credit to so absurd an account, we have no means of ascertaining the exact numbers on either side. That the loss of the Saracens was immense, we have the authority of their own chroniclers to vouch, and there was not a family in Granada but had to mourn the loss of a member. Alfonso proved himself the worthy descendant of his heroic forefathers. Though at one time surrounded by a multitude of foes, his firmness was unshaken, and he defended himself vigorously at the head of his small band until disengaged by his troops.

The King of Portugal having thus efficiently assisted his son-in-law, returned to his own dominions, refusing to accept any share in the spoils beyond a few rich swords and caparisons. The booty, in gold alone, was so great, that the coin of that metal decreased one-sixth in value. In this battle Alfonso certainly won more renown than his predecessor and namesake at that of Las Navas de Tolosa. Alfonso VIII. had had time to prepare himself, he had ample means, and three Kings with their forces to assist him, besides an immense number of foreigners, who came from all parts of Europe to win fame and the blessings of the Church, this having been a species of crusade enjoined by the Pontiff himself.

* Some of the Spanish writers assert that 200,000 Moors fell in that battle!—*Cronica de Alfonso Onceno.*

Alfonso XII. was greatly weakened by the defection of several of his high vassals, had had little or no time to prepare to resist so numerous a force, and was assisted only by his father-in-law. The Castilian sovereign sent a portion of the spoils as presents to the Pope, among which were twenty-four banners won from the foe and now borne by as many captives, and one hundred magnificent horses splendidly caparisoned, with rich swords and shields hanging at the saddle-bows, and led by as many captives. The King also sent his own standard to the Pope, and the steed he rode during the battle, with trappings embroidered with the arms of Leon and Castile, and many valuable jewels. The King's gift was received with the utmost solemnity by the Pope, who ordered public thanks to be returned to God for the signal victory he had vouchsafed to the Christian arms.

This famous battle was the precursor of many others between the Moors and the Castilians, Alfonso ever distinguishing himself by his personal bravery and his talents as a commander. Four years afterwards, the kingdom of Algeciras was also conquered, having previously sustained a long and tedious siege, by Alfonso, who had in the meanwhile won several naval battles.

During the five succeeding years, the kingdom enjoyed peace and tranquillity, though it is more than probable that the inmates of the royal palace were far from participating in these blessings. The neglected Queen, however, whatever might be her feelings, gave no outward signs of resentment, but though she appeared thus patiently to endure being reduced to a secondary position, she secretly nourished a hope of vengeance, and silently awaited the day when she could retaliate her wrongs on the head of her hated rival. Nor did Maria

wait in vain. The death of Alfonso, who fell a victim to a pestilence in March, 1350, while engaged in the siege of Gibraltar,* entirely changed the face of public affairs in Castile. Pedro, the son of Maria, a youth not sixteen, was proclaimed King, and urged by his mother, gave his consent to the first of those sanguinary deeds that have caused succeeding generations to view his character through a veil of blood. The unhappy Leonor was arrested, thrown into prison, and finally strangled by an attendant of the Queen.† Thus she who had reigned in Castile, if not with the title, at least with the sway and attributes of a sovereign, passionately beloved during twenty years by one of Spain's greatest monarchs, while still in the bloom of her extraordinary beauty, cruelly expiated her long usurpation of that place in the King's heart which the laws assigned to another.‡

The records of those times, while they say little of the mental and personal attractions of Maria, endow her rival with every charm. The attachment of Leonor to the King during so long a space of time, was evinced by the untiring devotion with which she constantly sought to promote his welfare and anticipate his every wish. Though she might easily have induced her royal lover

* Gibraltar had fallen into the hands of the Moors in 1331, through the want of forethought of the Alcalde Vasco Perez, who, during the previous peace, sold the surplus of provisions the place contained to the Moors, and was afterwards forced to surrender by famine.

† Immediately after the death of Alfonso, Leonor was conveyed to the Castle of Talavera, and her entreaties to be permitted once more to see her children were disregarded; while all the members of her family, which was peculiarly obnoxious to Juan Alonzo de Alburquerque, the favourite of the young King, were virulently persecuted.—Ed.

‡ Leonor de Guzman was one year older than Alfonso, and eighteen years of age when the intimacy commenced.

to repudiate a Queen whose feeling and tastes were so uncongenial, and give to her he loved that place on his throne she had already secured in his affections, and though not only did the manners of those times allow of this being easily effected, but she was repeatedly urged to this step by powerful adherents, her good sense never permitted her to yield to the suggestions of ambition. During the life of Alfonso, the brilliancy of Leonor threw the Queen into the shade, the few adherents of the latter being weak and powerless, while the Court of the favourite was thronged by the high-born and wealthy lords of Castile.

Maria, though she had satisfied her thirst for revenge, and freed herself from the detested rival whose dying pangs it is said she witnessed with exultation, was far from enjoying as a widow the happiness she had failed in attaining as a wife. She had instilled from early childhood in the mind of her son the cruel doctrine of retaliation, she had induced him to the first revengeful act, but the first step once taken in the career of blood, no hand could check his headlong course. Maria, who had won no love from her husband, was equally unsuccessful with her son, whom she could not even inspire with respect towards the parent who had cultivated instead of stifling the evil passions he had derived from her. Having persuaded her son to marry the Princess Blanche of France, the Queen repaired to Valladolid in 1353 to receive the bride, but though the nuptials were celebrated, she had the mortification of seeing Don Pedro neglect his young Queen for Maria Padilla. Finding her persuasions ineffectual, the Queen Dowager thought to coerce her son into adopting another line of conduct, and for that purpose joined the league which the nobles had formed against him, and

momentarily obtained her object, Pedro being forced by them to dismiss all the relatives and creatures of his mistress from his service, and to replace them with gentlemen named by the leaguers. But these extorted concessions were annulled the instant that Pedro was able to free himself from the restraint in which he was held.

In 1355 the King was in a condition to revenge the insult offered: and in Toro, before the eyes of the horror-struck Queen, whose garments were covered with their blood and brains, four of her partisans were felled by the maces and daggers of the King's ballesteros,* by his commands. The miserable witness of this bloody scene fainted on the bodies. She could not with justice reproach her son for thus revenging his wrongs, since she herself had taught him the lesson he now put in practice on his own account, and she but reaped the fruits of the seed she had sown. Disregarded, despised, even suspected, and not without some foundation, of having plotted to dethrone her son, almost trembling for her own life, while in the power of one who in his resentment was inflexible and pitiless, Maria solicited the King's permission to retire to Portugal in 1356. She, however, vainly sought to avoid the fate that pursued her; and, doomed throughout the whole course of her existence to suffer through her nearest and dearest, she was put to death by order of her own father, in Portugal, in 1357.

The reason assigned for this unnatural deed was the scandal occasioned by the disorderly conduct of the Queen, who, forgetful of her elevated station, gave loose to the most licentious passions. One of the adherents who was

* *Ballesteros*, a body of men-at-arms, whose principal weapon was a short club, or mace.

slain in her presence in Toro, Don Martin Tello, had been suspected of being more intimate with his sovereign lady than was becoming, and the knowledge of this probably contributed to lessen Pedro's respect and affection for his mother.

NOTE.—A singular coincidence is noticed by Garabay. Three of the sovereigns of Leon and Castile, of the same name, had mistresses of the noble house of Guzman, and the descendants of each of these ladies, albeit illegitimate, ascended a throne. Doña Ximena Nunez de Guzman was mother of Alfonso VI., of the Infanta Elvira, who married Henry, Count of Portugal, and became the mother of Don Alfonso Henriquez, first King of Portugal; Doña Maria Guillen de Guzman, the mistress of Alfonso the Astrologer, gave birth to Beatrix, who married Alfonso III., fifth King of Portugal; and Leonor de Guzman gave birth to the Count of Trastamara, afterwards Henry II. King of Castile.

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## BLANCHE OF BOURBON.

### 1353.

REIGN OF PEDRO I., SURNAMED THE CRUEL AND THE STRICT.*

THIS ill-fated lady was the daughter of Pedro I., Duke of Bourbon, and of his Duchess, Isabella of Valois. Already nearly allied by birth to the royal family of France, her father being the cousin of King John, these ties had been strengthened in 1350 by the marriage of her sister Jane with Charles, Dauphin of France and Duke of Normandy. Fate seemed to have surrounded

* *El Justiciero;* literally, this word implies one who executes rigid and summary justice—an inflexible but just executioner. There is no English word that conveys exactly the meaning of the Spanish term.

Blanche with powerful connections only to prove their uselessness to shield her from the sorrows and tragical death to which she was destined. By the advice of his mother and council, Pedro, the young sovereign of Castile, in 1351, sent Ambassadors with proposals for the hand of the French Princess, which was granted. The marriage contract was signed on the 7th of July, 1352, the dower consisting of 300,000 gold florins; and the Princess arrived on Monday, 25th February, 1353, in Valladolid, where the Queen-Mother and other members of the royal family were waiting to receive her. The Castilian envoys had met the Princess in Narbonne, and attended her through the remainder of her journey.

While the negotiations for her marriage were going through the tedious forms of diplomacy, an event had occurred which influenced the whole course of Blanche's married life; and ere she reached the dominions of her destined husband, her place in his heart had been taken by another. The sons of Leonor having fled to Portugal after their mother's death, Pedro, by the persuasions of his grandfather, granted a safe conduct to Enrique and his brothers, that they might return and reside on their own estates in Asturias; but his leniency in the present case was productive of no good results; his half-brothers commencing the series of rebellions and vexations that, irritating a naturally impetuous temper, caused Pedro to retaliate by those summary executions which have procured for him the surnames of the Cruel and the Avenger, according to the light in which they have been viewed. Don Alfonso Fernandez Coronel, a powerful noble, rebelling, fortified himself in his town of Aguilar, in Andalusia, Don Tello, a son of Leonor,* did the same in his

* Doña Leonor de Guzman gave birth to nine sons and one daughter.

lordship of Aranda de Duero, ravaging the King's domains, and the Count Enrique followed his example in his own town of Gijon. Having left a force before Aguilar, the King proceeded to Gijon, which he besieged, and took. While thus engaged, Pedro lodged at the house of Doña Isabel de Meneses, the wife of his favourite minister, Don Alfonso de Alburquerque, and there met with Maria Padilla, a very pretty damsel of good birth, under the care of his hostess. An uncle of Maria, Don Juan de Hinestrosa, in the hope that her beauty would assist materially in raising him to power, facilitated the intrigue, which was, moreover, encouraged by Don Alfonso, with the view of keeping the King amused, and thus rendering his own services indispensable.

Pedro, who carried everything to the extreme, gave himself up to the fascination of the charming Padilla, and appeared to have entirely forgotten the bride then on her way, and to whom he was expected to sacrifice what now constituted his happiness. This fair one, who retained the affection of her sovereign to her last hour, and whose death caused him such excessive grief, was a pretty brunette, rather below the middle height, with a clear olive complexion, fine dark eyes, a graceful figure, and possessed, in addition to these personal charms, of a good heart and sweet disposition. The arrival of Blanche was a source of great annoyance to Pedro, who was, with the utmost difficulty, induced to repair to Valladolid to

Pedro, who died when eight years of age; Sancho, who became an idiot; Henry, Count of Trastamara, and Frederic, the Grand Master of Santiago, Fernando, Tello, Juan, Pedro, another Sancho, and Juana, who married Don Fernando de Castro. All these natural children being richly endowed, the patrimony of the young King was consequently diminished.

see the affianced, and already hated, bride, that policy was about to force on him. The nuptials were celebrated with the utmost splendour, in that town, on Monday, the 3rd of June, 1353, the King's half brothers, Don Enrique and Don Tello,* his cousins the exiled Infantes of Aragon, and the high vassals of the kingdom vying with each other in magnificent display. The tournaments that took place on the occasion were honoured by the presence of the sovereign and Princes, mounted on white horses, splendidly caparisoned, Don Enrique and Don Tello leading the bride's palfrey, Don Fernando, Prince of Aragon, that of his mother the Dowager Queen of Aragon, and his brother Don Juan that of the Dowager Queen of Castile.

But though the mask was decorated with regal pomp, it could not long be worn by one of Don Pedro's impetuous temper; and his dislike of his consort, far from diminishing on a more intimate acquaintance, soon became insurmountable abhorrence. Whatever may have been his faults, hypocrisy was not among them; and scorning to feign an affection he could not feel, he treated the Queen with indifference and neglect. This state of

* Though Don Frederic had been reconciled with the King when his brothers were received into Don Pedro's favour, his name is not mentioned in any of the occurrences that took place from that time to the 4th of March, 1353; nor is it known where he was from March, 1351, to February, 1353. He may have been residing on his own domains, or the territories that belonged to his jurisdiction as Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of Santiago, but it is strange that he did not attend the King's nuptials. From his absence on this occasion, the author of the notes to Ayala's chronicle of Don Pedro opines that the Grand Master did not accompany Blanche from France;—a sense of guilt and prudential considerations may, however, have dictated his absence on that occasion, and it is probable that on his arrival in Spain he retired to his estates. If, as some assert, he was in love with Blanche, it was natural he should wish to avoid seeing her wedded to his brother.

things could not last long, and on the third day after his marriage, while the King was dining alone, his mother and aunt entering the apartment bathed in tears, expostulated with him on the coldness he manifested towards Blanche. These remonstrances produced the effect that usually attends reasoning in such cases. Affection was never yet inspired by persuasive arguments; and Pedro, of all men, was the least likely to be driven to love where he hated. Returning an evasive answer to their entreaties, he avoided all further discussions on the subject by mounting his horse, two hours afterwards, and rejoining Maria Padilla at Montalvan.

Many are the reasons assigned for the strange aversion which Pedro had conceived in so short a time for a bride of eighteen, who, though not praised for beauty is said not to have been homely, and is described as a good-looking blonde. Rumour asserted that Don Frederic, the King's half-brother having been one of the envoys sent to conduct the French Princess to Spain, had become enamoured of his fair charge who had reciprocated his passion, and that this intrigue, of which a living proof remained, coming to the knowledge of the King, occasioned the inveterate animosity he ever displayed to both Blanche and Frederic, and which in the end proved so fatal to both. For this story no good authority can be found, and it is even asserted that Frederic did not form part of the retinue named to accompany Blanche.* It is likely,

* Those who favour the idea that an intrigue had existed between Blanche and Frederic, not only assert that the Grand Master was one of the envoys sent to bring her to Spain, but that they were a whole year on the way thither; "A proof," they maliciously add, "that the roads were in a shocking bad condition, or that they took the *wrong one*." In

however, that Henry II. took especial pains on his accession to destroy every document that would criminate his brother, the Grand Master, and exculpate his murdered brother, King Pedro. Among other reports, a story was circulated which in those times was probably thought deserving of credit, however absurd it may appear in ours.

Among the marriage gifts presented by Blanche to the King, it was said that there was a belt studded with gems, which having fallen into the hands of Maria Padilla, was by her given to a Jewish sorcerer, who worked such wonders upon it by his magic art, that when the King attempted to put it on it appeared to his distorted vision a serpent; whereupon filled with horror, he threw it from him, demanding of his attendants the meaning of this portent, and whence came the girdle. They being creatures of Maria, reminded the King that this was the Queen's gift, and from that day forth indifference became hatred.* But in one of Don Pedro's violent fits of passion, and who from early childhood had never

the history of Languedoc, by the monks of St. Maur, it is expressly stated that the Princess crossed that province by the way of Rousellon at the end of the year 1352, that she was in Bagnolles on the 17th of December, that she left Mines on the 26th, and remained in Narbonne ten days, waiting the arrival of the Castilian envoys who were to accompany her to Spain.—*Notes to the Cronica de Alfonso Onceno pr. Ayala*

* A rather more rational version of this absurd superstition, states that a Hebrew wizard had presented a girdle to the royal bride, which, he asserted, would, whenever it was worn, act as a spell upon the affections of the young King; but that the consequences of her confidence in this assurance were fatal, the sorcerer being in the interests of the Padilla family, and the enchanted girdle assuming, when clasped about her waist, the appearance of a huge serpent.—Ed.

known opposition, this hatred is sufficiently accounted for by the fact of his having been compelled, as it were, to marry Blanche, when his affections were engaged elsewhere.

The departure of Pedro, and the knowledge that he had gone to join his mistress, caused a great commotion in Valladolid, the nobles dividing and taking sides according as their several interests made it appear most advantageous. The King's half-brothers, Don Enrique and Don Tello, his cousins the Infantes of Aragon, and other nobles, took horse and followed him, while his great favourite, Don Alfonso de Alburquerque, who had been a party to the introduction of Maria Padilla to the King, now jealous of that lady's influence, which threatened to counterbalance his own, remained behind and joined the Queens in taking measures for the reunion of Don Pedro with his bride.

Meanwhile, the King apprised of the schemes of his minister, and the plots against his idol, whose safety he had reason to consider in danger from his knowledge of his minister's character, sent a message to him, purporting that he required his services; but the wily lord, aware of the monarch's intentions, took the road to his domains on the frontiers of Portugal, and there fortified himself.

From Montalvan Don Pedro removed to Toledo, accompanied by Maria, and there gave his attention to the disposal of the different offices of which he had deprived the creatures of the disgraced minister. The relatives of Doña Maria Padilla representing to him the mischief that would arise from his abandonment of his bride, Pedro finally consented to return to Valladolid; but, from whatsoever cause it might spring, his invincible aversion seemed to increase tenfold in the society of his bride, and two days after he again left her, nor could any persuasion

ever induce him even to see her again. Blanche then removed with her mother-in-law to Tordesillas, and thence to Medina del Campo.

While in the latter place, Doña Maria assisted Don Alvar Perez de Castro* and Don Alvar Gonzalez Moran, by providing them with fresh horses, to escape into Portugal. These gentlemen had been warned by the humanity of Maria Padilla, that the King, whose just resentment they had incurred, intended to arrest them, and that it would go hard with them should they fall into his hands. Don Pedro having removed to Segovia, there bestowed on Don Tello, his brother, the hand of Doña Juana, daughter and heiress of Don Juan Nuñez de Lara, Lord of Biscay. This marriage had been arranged during the life-time of the late sovereign.

Advised that Medina del Campo was the focus of the secret spirit of rebellion that pervaded the whole kingdom, and Blanche the pretext of all the plots, the King sent orders that she should be forthwith removed to Arevalo, and deprived of all communication with his mother. Don Pedro was betrayed on all sides, for the Grand Master of Santiago and the Count of Trastamara, even while with him, were negotiating with Don Alfonso de Alburquerque, who had taken refuge in Portugal, and these traitors were endeavouring to persuade Pedro, the Crown Prince of Portugal, to dethrone the King of Castile.†

The Prince was rather inclined to favour this project, but his father scouted the idea, and it lived and died in a

* A countryman of the Queen Dowager and brother of her brother's mistress, Ines de Castro, subsequently acknowledged Queen of Portugal.

† They wished the Prince of Portugal to claim the crown of Castile as his right, he being the son of Beatrix, daughter of Sancho IV.

day. The agent of the conspirators was Don Alvaro Perez de Castro. Doña Juana, a sister of this gentleman, does not seem to have shared the hatred with which the King pursued him. This lady, widow of Don Diego de Haro, Lord of Biscay, whose beauty inspired Pedro with a passion as violent as it proved evanescent, was too proud and high-born to consent to become his mistress; and, strange to tell, Don Pedro offered her his hand! To satisfy her scruples and remove her objections, two Bishops (of Salamanca and Ayila) were summoned to Cuellar, and the King having given the reason he thought valid for regarding his marriage with Blanche as worthless, these courtier-prelates pronounced him free, and at liberty to marry whomsoever he chose. The reason assigned by Pedro was, that previous to his marriage with the French Princess, he had entered a solemn though secret protest against that union.

This mock marriage with Doña Juana de Castro was performed in Cuellar in the early part of 1354; but the lady found she had been too hasty and too credulous, and purchased the momentary gratification of her vanity at the expense of her honour, for the King left her the day after the wedding, and never after came near her. He, however, presented her with the town of Dueñas, and she persisted to her death in retaining the empty title of Queen, though it was never acknowledged. That two high dignitaries of the Church could have been found willing thus to desecrate the sacrament they professed to hold sacred, and to perform this solemn farce, is almost incredible, and for the King no apology can be offered in extenuation. It would appear that some misunderstanding had arisen between him and Doña Maria Padilla, but

his love for her was too strong to be quenched thus suddenly, and he returned to her immediately.*

I will not attempt to follow Don Pedro through the civil wars which continued for nineteen years with varied success, but relate all that was ever known of the hapless Blanche. From Arevalo, where she was strictly guarded rather than attended by Don Pedro Gudiel, Bishop of Segovia, Don Tello Gonzalez Palameque and Don Juan Manso, who were officers of the Queen's household, the King ordered that she should be conveyed to Toledo under the charge of Don Juan de Hinestrosa, and there lodged in the Alcazar. On her way thither some friend contrived to advise Blanche to take sanctuary on her arrival at Toledo, and in accordance with this suggestion the Queen expressed a wish, when they entered the town, to offer up her prayers in the cathedral.

Once within its precincts, she refused to leave them, and Don Juan not daring to violate the sacred premises, hastened to report this occurrence to his master. The ladies of Toledo hearing of their Queen's arrival, immediately waited on her, and, moved by the appeal she made to them to protect her life, which she thought in

* A party of the grandees of the kingdom had induced Queen Leonor to represent to the King the dissensions which were occasioned by his open violation of his marriage duties and the protracted captivity of his wife; and to urge him at once to reinstate her in her rights; and to consign Maria de Padilla to some nunnery, either in Spain or France, as he might deem most advisable; but he haughtily replied to her representations and entreaties, that he denied the right of his subjects to interfere with his domestic arrangements, and that he had no intention of separating himself from the favourite. But, nevertheless, from some caprice, which remains unexplained, he very shortly afterwards contracted the extraordinary marriage mentioned in the text.—Ed.

danger, warmly espoused her cause; and urged their husbands and brothers in her favour with such success that they prepared to resist even their King.* A deputation of the principal gentlemen of Toledo escorted the Queen and her attendants to the Alcazar, which she had once dreaded as a prison, but was now to consider as a place of safety, and a number of noble Toledanos volunteered to mount guard for her better security. This occurred on the 14th of August, and so decisive a step taken, it was necessary to prepare to sustain what they had done. Messengers were dispatched to Don Frederic, Don Enrique, Don Alfonso de Alburquerque, Don Fernando de Castro,† and other disaffected lords, inviting them to join in the Queen's defence, and offering to receive them into the town with any troops they might collect.

The example of Toledo was followed by the towns of Cuenca, Cordova, Iaca, and Talavera. Many gentlemen also thronged to the Queen's standard. The nobles already mentioned, the Princes of Aragon, the King's three brothers, Don Juan de la Cerda, many ricos-hombres and cavaliers, numbering in all some seven thousand horse, and a large body of infantry,‡ assembled in

* They bade them beware how they refused to protect the Queen, for their names would become infamous throughout Castile.

† Another brother of the deceived Doña Juana de Castro.

‡ Frederic having answered the call of the Toledanos at the head of seven hundred horse, was received and lodged in the suburbs of the town. On his arrival, the Grand Master repaired to the Alcazar, and in an interview with the Queen, swore to devote his sword to her service. Being apprised that the army of the insurgents had assembled in Medina del Campo, Frederic was advised by the chief townsmen to join his forces with theirs, which he did, carrying with him large sums, that had been left in Toledo in the King's treasury, and which Blanche collected and

Medina del Campo, and from thence sent their petitions, or rather their demands to the King. The principal among the conditions the rebels dictated to their sovereign, were: that he should live with his Queen, dismiss his favourites (the brother and uncle of Maria Padilla), of whom they loudly complained as insolent and overbearing, and that the offices they filled should be bestowed on others, whom they, the leaguers, should name. If these conditions were accepted, they professed themselves willing to return to their allegiance. The bearer of these proposals was no less a person than Leonor, the Dowager Queen of Aragon; but her previous conduct had given rise to so much suspicion in her nephew's mind, that her persuasions could avail little.

The nobles having, in order to procure the necessary provisions for their troops, removed to the territory of Zamora, Don Pedro went to Ureña,* where Maria Padilla was then residing, thus giving a tacit refusal to their demands. After vainly attempting to possess themselves of Valladolid and Salamanca, the leaguers removed to Medina del Campo, which they took by scaling the walls: and here one of the chief nobles, Don Alfonso de Alburquerque, died. His death was attributed to poison, and the King accused of bribing his leech to commit the deed, though this report is as unfounded as that of many other crimes laid to his charge.

The dying noble carrying his hatred beyond the portals of the tomb, ordered in his will that his body

placed in his hands to be used by the leaguers to further their plans. The proof this visit afforded of the devotion of the Grand Master to the service of Blanche, was not overlooked by his enemies.

* Don Pedro had but six hundred men with him, and could offer no resistance.

should not be consigned to the grave until the enterprise in which he had been engaged while alive had come to a conclusion; and the corpse was, in accordance with his wishes, borne in the coffin whithersoever the army moved. The Queen-Mother openly declaring against her son, invited the leaguers to join her in Toro. All repaired thither, among others, the widow of Don Alfonso, Doña Leonor, Dowager of Aragon, the Countess Doña Juana, wife of Don Enrique,* and other high-born ladies. Here, against the express will of the King, the marriage of Don Fernando de Castro with Pedro's half-sister, Juana, daughter of Leonor de Guzman, was celebrated.

Powerless to resist the large force of the insurgents, the King was compelled to consent to their demands, and to join them in Toro; but they no sooner had the sovereign in their power, than they exacted the most outrageous concessions, dismissing all those whom he had appointed to office, replacing them from their own ranks, and obliging the King to distribute among the chiefs a number of towns and castles, the two Queens being no less eager than the nobles for a share of the spoils.†

During four years was Don Pedro, thus kept a prisoner by his insolent vassals, enduring every species of mortification. This situation must have been intolerable to Don Pedro, who could not take the air without being attended by a body-guard of a thousand men! Some time after, however, the *surveillance* was somewhat relaxed, and being out one day hawking, he watched his opportunity, and setting spurs to his horse, distanced his pursuers, and made his escape to Segovia. From this

* Afterwards Queen of Castile.

† Having now attained their object, the leaguers buried the corpse of Don Alfonso in Toro.

town he sent to demand of the Queens, his mother and aunt, the royal seals, intimating that if they did not send them *he had metal to cast others.* They, however, made no difficulty of surrendering them, and the King's departure breaking up the league, nearly all the nobles retired to their own domains.* From Segovia he removed to Burgos, where, having convened the Cortes, he complained bitterly of his mother and the league that had held him a prisoner, and requested a grant of a considerable sum in order to raise troops and punish the conspirators. This was readily granted, and Pedro immediately took the most energetic measures for the chastisement of his rebellious vassals.

Having gone to Medina del Campo, the irritated sovereign there commenced the terrible retaliation with which he mercilessly visited their treason on the heads of the offenders, taking signal vengeance whenever the ill fortune of his enemies placed them in his hands. Many were the heads that fell in Medina del Campo, though whether this severity was not necessary, nay, indispensable rather than wanton cruelty, if we take into consideration the distracted state of the country, I will leave the reader to decide.

From Medina the King returned to Toro, which he be-

* The leaguers kept no more faith with each other than with their sovereign. The King's Aunt Leonor, and her sons, the Infantes of Aragon, having, some time previous to his departure, entered into a secret treaty with Don Pedro, connived at his escape. The price of the treachery of Leonor and her sons to their own party, was stipulated as follows. To Doña Leonor, the town of Roa; to Don Fernando of Aragon, the town of Madrigal, the Real of Manzanares, Aranda, and other places in Andalusia. To his brother, Juan of Aragon, Biscay, Lara, Valdecorneja and Oropesa, and the post of Governor of the frontiers. Other lords joining them, were paid in proportion. The King was scrupulous in putting each in possession of the places promised them.

sieged. On his approach, Don Enrique and Don Frederic left Toro and took the way to Toledo, but the inhabitants of that town were now greatly divided, and the majority refused to admit the Princes, and advised them to retire to their own possessions.

The Princes, displeased that the proffered hospitality of the Toledanos should be reduced to advice, broke into the town forcibly, with the assistance of some of their adherents, within the gates. The townsmen then summoned the King, who came immediately, and, though the Princes attempted to prevent his entrance, they were forced to yield, and retreat with their followers to the number of 800 men, through one gate, as the King entered by another. Here again the useless efforts of the Grand Master in favour of Blanche were noted to his disadvantage, and fed the King's resentment without benefitting her. The King, in order to avoid seeing the Queen, took up his residence in a private house; and shortly after Blanche was, by his orders, removed to the castle of Siguenza. Twenty-four of the chief rebels of Toledo were executed during the King's stay. No half-measures were possible; the rebellion was spreading rapidly, and to pardon one of its heads was to let loose another foe. Strange to say, the decrees issued by Don Pedro prove that amid this confusion and warfare, the administration of civil affairs was carefully attended to.

Don Pedro entered Toro on the 6th of January, 1357, and here new executions took place. This town had been the head-quarters of the rebels, and the King bore a keen remembrance of the insults he had endured there. On the news of his approach, his mother sent to request the assistance of Don Enrique and Don Frederic; but, though both came, and the town made a desperate resistance, the

former, foreseeing that it would be vain, retreated to Galicia. The Grand Master having held a parley with the King from the walls, agreed to throw himself on his mercy, and with only six or eight followers issued from the gates and repaired to his brother's camp, where he was kindly received. Well it was that he did so, as some of the citizens had agreed to open the gates to the King that very night, and Frederic's reliance on his brother alone saved his life. The Queen, seeing herself forsaken by the Grand Master, took refuge in the Alcazar, with many gentlemen, while others sought concealment in the town. The King having entered that night, on the following day came to the palace gates, and summoned the Queen to come forth. Maria answered with an entreaty that he would ensure the lives of those who were with her; but the King bade her come forth, and he would do that which should seem best to him.

The Queen-Mother then came forth, accompanied by Doña Juana the wife of Don Enrique, and all the gentlemen who had taken refuge with her. Her forced compliance was of no avail to soften her son, who had probably already given his orders, for the ballesteros instantly despatched the four followers of the Queen, though she was leaning on the arms of two of them at the time. One of the victims of the King's ire was Don Martin Alfonso Tello, a Portuguese, who had come with the Queen on her return from a visit to Portugal, and whom it was suspected she favoured more than was consistent with propriety.

When the Queen recovered from the long fit into which the sight of these massacres had thrown her, she uttered the most frightful maledictions on the head of her son, who took no farther notice than ordering her to be removed to the palace where she resided. She shortly after

requested and obtained leave to retire to Portugal. To those who unconditionally threw themselves on his mercy, Pedro was lenient, as happened in the case of Martin Abarca, who, previous to the gates being opened, had taken the King's young half-brother, Juan in his arms, and asked the King to guarantee his safety, that he might come to him; but Don Pedro replying that he would only forgive his brother, and would order him to be killed, Abarca threw himself unconditionally on his mercy, and coming down with the boy, knelt at his feet. Don Pedro, though he turned from him, gave him his life.

Though soon after involved in a war with the King of Aragon, who sided with his rebellious nobles; and continually betrayed by those in whom he most trusted, Don Pedro, by his energy, bravery, and perseverance, repeatedly defeated the plots of the traitors. Don Enrique, hopeless of succour, and fearful of falling into the hands of his irritated brother, fled into France, where he was kindly received by John, who furnished him with troops to return and recommence hostilities. The victorious Pedro, entering Biscay, Don Tello was forced to fly, and the Countess, his wife,* being thrown into prison, and the Infante Juan of Aragon, who claimed Biscay as his wife's patrimony, slain, that lordship was annexed to the crown. Don Frederic was the next victim of the King's resentment, or rather of the necessity of the times, being slain on the

* Don Tello de Guzman had married Doña Juana de Lara, and Juan, the son of Leonor, had married the younger sister, Isabel de Lara. These two ladies were the heiresses of the lordship of Biscay. Isabel and her mother-in-law, Leonor, the King's aunt, were, by his orders, imprisoned in the castle of Castro Xeria, and both sisters, as well as Queen Leonor, subsequently put to death—Juana de Lara in Seville, Isabel in Herez de la Frontera, and Leonor in Castro Xerix.

29th of May, 1358, in Seville, some say by the hands of the King himself.* In 1361, took place the death of the hapless Blanche, who had been kept a close prisoner since her removal from Toledo. The Queen had been taken from the castle of Siguenza to that of Xerez, and from thence to Medina Sidonia, where she ended her sad existence. Whether her death was natural or brought about by violence, has never been ascertained. Some writers assert that it was effected by poison, others say that she fell by the dagger of one of the King's ballesteros, acting by the King's express command.

The greatest enemies of Don Pedro, the most determined partisans of the bastard of Trastamara, the writers who have laboured most to attach every species of odium to his memory, have never been able to prove that Blanche was murdered. The impenetrable veil of mystery which shrouds that event has allowed full scope to the fertile imaginations of the poet and the novelist, and the supposed jealousy between the King and the Grand Master has contributed not a little to heighten the romance.

The same year saw the death of Maria Padilla, who had for nearly ten years been the object of Pedro's affection.

* Don Frederic had for the last two years enjoyed the dignity of Master of Santiago, in which he had succeeded the brother of Maria de Padilla; but his extreme popularity excited the distrust of the jealous and unscrupulous Pedro, who dispatched a messenger to summon him to his presence, by whom he expressed his anxiety to recompense him for the services which he had already rendered to Castile in his new capacity. The young Prince, unsuspicious of treachery, at once obeyed; but he had no sooner reached the threshold of the apartment than the tiger-King made a concerted signal to some of his attendants, and the unfortunate victim was slain before his eyes. Certain authorities even attest that his own dagger participated in the deed of blood.—Ed.

Her loss was a great blow to the King, who endeavoured to find consolation by bestowing those honours on her when dead which he could not confer on her while living. Having convoked the Cortes in Seville in the following year, he declared that Maria had been lawfully wedded to him previous to his marriage with Blanche, and that he had consented to his union with the latter only in the hope of preventing a civil war. As witnesses of the marriage he brought his Chaplain, his Chancellor, and a brother of Maria. The Archbishop of Toledo having received their oaths to that effect, no farther opposition was made; and the four children to whom Maria had given birth were declared legitimate heirs to the crown.

These were Alfonso, then four years of age, who died shortly after, Beatrix who took the veil, Constance, who married John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Maria, who married Edmund, Duke of York. It was thought by many that Don Pedro had proclaimed the lawfulness of his union with Maria to procure the legitimation of her children, and thus to baffle the hopes of the numerous pretenders to the crown.

This prior union, however, was the reason he chose to assign for his constant refusal to live with Blanche. Be this as it may, there is not sufficient evidence of a precontract with Doña Maria to warrant her being placed in the rank of the Queens of Castile. Navarre having joined Aragon against Don Pedro, and France also assisting Don Enrique, in asserting his claim on the crown, the Castilian sovereign was compelled to solicit the aid of Edward III., King of England, for which purpose having gone to Bayonne, he there had an interview with Edward, the Black Prince, who received him with kindness and readily promised his assistance, for which he was to be amply re-

munerated with the lordship of Biscay, 56,000 florins of gold for his own use, and 550,000 for the pay of his troops, the daughters of Don Pedro being left as hostages for the fulfilment of the conditions. In the spring of 1367, the English allies having entered Spain, a battle was fought between the forces of the two brothers, in which the army of Don Enrique, although amounting to 70,000 men, was completely worsted. This battle was fought on the 3rd of April, in the vicinity of Najara, the lawful Prince and the usurper* defending their respective claims in person, Pedro especially displaying the undaunted bravery that was his chief characteristic. Don Tello, who commanded a body of horse, disgraced himself by a hasty retreat, nor did any part of the army appear to oppose with any degree of energy the troops of Pedro, and Enrique fled into Aragon with a few attendants only.

At the close of the year, Enrique returned to Castile and renewed the contest, which was continued with alternate success on both sides, until 1369, when Don Pedro was besieged in Montiel and cut off from all supplies. In this extremity one of his knights, Men Rodriguez de Sanabria, having solicited and obtained an interview with the famous Bertrand Du Guesclin, one of the commanders of the French mercenaries, in the army of Enrique, proposed to him that he should facilitate the escape of the Castilian monarch. For this service he offered the French knight the hereditary possession of the towns of Soria, Almazan, Monteagudo, Alienza, Deza and Moron, besides 200,000 doubloons in gold. The condi-

* Enrique, after overrunning Castile, had caused himself to be proclaimed King, in 1366.

tions were accepted, and it was settled that Don Pedro should leave Montiel under cover of the night, and repair to the tent of the Breton chief, who was to escort him thence to a place of safety. At the appointed hour the King made his appearance, attended by three of his devoted followers; but, in the meanwhile Du Guesclin had stained his honour and imprinted on his name a brand of shame that no after-deeds of glory could erase.

The traitor had, for a still larger reward, sold the monarch, who trusting to his knightly faith, had placed himself in his hands. , Having dismounted and entered the tent of his betrayer, the King urged him to hasten and take horse, to which Du Guesclin replied that the horses were saddling. Pedro's suspicions being roused by the delay, he insisted on returning to the fortress, when the truth was made evident by the entrance of Enrique. Time had probably greatly changed the King, for his brother did not recognize him, but advancing said: "Where is the bastard who calls himself King of Castile?" To this the King instantly replied, "Thou art the bastard, I am the son of King Alfonso." On this Enrique, who was completely armed, struck the King in the face with his dagger, but the latter instantly grappled with him, and both fell to the ground. Though unarmed, Don Pedro's activity and strength of muscle gave him the advantage, and in this desperate struggle, having contrived to get Enrique under him, he would have decided the contest by strangling his antagonist, had not Du Guesclin, seeing the Prince's danger, thrust the King down and held him, while Enrique plunged his dagger in his throat. Some say the Frenchman wounded the King in the back while Enrique was underneath him, and thus compelled him

to relinquish his hold.* Thus perished Don Pedro, in his thirty-sixth year, on the 23rd of March, in the year 1369.

This truly unfortunate sovereign has been depicted with the blackest colours, and stigmatized as a capricious tyrant, a monster revelling in the miseries he inflicted, and sparing neither friend nor foe. Without seeking to exonerate him from the blame that many of his actions un-

* It would appear that the patriotism of the fair author of these Annals has unconsciously betrayed her into the error of condemning the French knight beyond his demerits, in order to palliate the atrocities of the Spanish King. There is no sound reason for believing that Du Guesclin ever accepted a bribe from Don Pedro to effect his escape; while, on the contrary, his reply, when urged to do so, is on record; and the whole circumstance is so consistent with the proud chivalry of the high-hearted soldier, who refused his own release without ransom, when it was proffered by Edward the Black Prince, declaring that he would himself fix the amount at 100,000 gold livres; for although poor in purse, he was rich in friends, and who found not only his fellow-knights, but even his sovereign ready to justify his words, that we prefer the more charitable version of the tale. When then Rodrigo de Sanabria, who was shut up with the Spanish monarch in the tower of Montiel, recognized the French knight from the bartizans, he hastened to make the alleged proposal, to which Du Guesclin replied by these memorable words: "I am a vassal of the King of France, and I was sent hither to support the cause of Don Enrique; which I will do like a true knight, lending no aid or countenance to his enemies." That the brave Bertrand could permit a barbarous murder to be committed in his presence, and under the very shadow of his tent, is a deep stain upon his memory; but there is no evidence to show that he assisted in the assassination, or disgraced his chivalry by the cowardly act of stabbing the King while he was engaged in a death-struggle with his brother; neither would it appear that Pedro sought his protection under the authority of his own promised safeguard. On the contrary, the water having failed in the beleaguered tower, the anguish of thirst induced the King to throw himself upon the generosity of his enemy; and it is asserted that it was the dagger of one Rocaberti which delivered Spain from the iron sceptre of a blood-thirsty and ferocious tyrant.—Ed.

doubtedly deserved, I would remind the reader that almost everything that has been written of him is from the pens of the adherents of his successor; and that these sought to make good their master's precarious tenure of a crown to which he had not the shadow of a claim,* by exaggerating every evil trait in his predecessor.

Don Pedro had been left from his infancy under the care of a mother whose subsequent conduct showed her to be very unfit for the charge; and who, aggravated by her own wrongs, and actuated by the hope of revenge, instilled the most pernicious doctrines into her child's mind, then ascending, at the early age of sixteen, a throne surrounded by secret foes, false friends, and selfish and ambitious partisans, all agreeing on one point, viz: to consider the Prince as a mere tool, and his dominions a lawful prey, of which, according to the strength of each, they were to have a larger or less share. During the first four years of his reign, a mere cipher, whose name was made use of to sanction every atrocity, Don Pedro was far more entitled to pity than execration. From the day on which he assumed the diadem, to that in which, together with his life, it was traitorously wrested from him, he was constantly at war with his grasping kinsmen and rebel Barons, disputing the possession of his hereditary kingdom, inch by inch, with a perseverance deserving better success.

During the long reign, for so it may be called, of his father's mistress, the popularity which her intellect and tact had enabled her to acquire, and to transmit to her numerous family, who, moreover, strengthened themselves by their marriages with the wealthiest heiresses of Castile,

* If the daughters of Don Pedro and Maria Padilla were illegitimate, they yet stood nearer to the throne than the son of Alfonso XII. and Leonor de Guzman.

prepared the way for the daring, and with one exception* unprecedented, attempt in Spain of an illegitimate son to dispossess the legitimate heir of the throne. Pedro had faults, and they were the natural results of the education and examples he had received. That he committed crimes is equally undeniable, but, with his passions, they were the almost inevitable consequences of the situation in which he was placed. To judge impartially of an action, we must consider the cause and motives for it. What in another monarch would have been unwarrantable cruelty, in Pedro was strict. but necessary and retributive justice. In many cases where he is censured as merciless, leniency would have been weakness.

The spirit of rebellion had cast its roots far and wide, and he was compelled to apply the axe deeply to eradicate them. History, while it takes note of the errors of this much abused Prince, should also chronicle the many great and good traits that partially redeem his character from the odium cast on it. Taught suspicion by the falseness of those around him, betrayed by his own mother and his aunt, forgiving repeatedly and receiving into his grace traitors, who, as often cast off their allegiance and turned their swords against him, what wonder that a naturally fiery temper should have at times carried him too far, that, exasperated by these never-ending plots, his justice should have merged into cruelty, that he should have felt justified in crushing those who so unscrupulously sought to deprive him of his rights? His most bitter detractors allow that he never took the life of one who had not been convicted or strongly suspected of treason.

* Mauregato, the bastard son of Alfonso I., usurped the crown from his nephew Alfonso II.

He was ruthless, but not without much provocation. One great argument in his favour is, that the commons loved, while the great vassals hated him, and the ballads in which the traditions of *Las justicias del Rey Don Pedro* are preserved, prove that his memory was long venerated by the lower ranks. A still more convincing proof of the love the people bore Don Pedro is found in the fact, that wherever resistance was opposed to the entrance of Enrique in any town, the struggle against him was maintained by the citizens, while the lords and gentry sided with the usurper. Administering even-handed justice to the poor as well as to the rich, to the peasant as well as to his powerful lord, imposing no fresh imposts on the people, defending their rights as tenaciously as he did his own, carrying his personal bravery to the verge of fool-hardiness, and, after a reign of continual warfare, dying at length, like the lion at bay, one against a multitude, betrayed, sold, and murdered, resigning his crown only with his life, Don Pedro was one as much sinned against as sinning. In person he was spare and tall, with sinewy and well-knit limbs, a fair complexion and brown hair, and he spoke with a slight, but not unpleasing lisp. To those who served him faithfully, he was munificent and kind, and his will proves that he forgot none of his good friends and loyal servants, for he not only left them ample legacies, but strenuously enjoined his heirs to continue them in their offices. It is seldom that a great personage disappears from the face of the earth, but the event is found to have been prophesied by some cunning seer, and many announcements of his impending fate are said to have been conveyed to Don Pedro. Among other things it was told him, that *from the tower of La Estrella he*

*would go forth to die.* The King had never been able to find out where such a tower existed, until, on leaving Montiel, he happened to look back and see on one of the towers of the town these words, carved in the stone—*This is the tower of La Estrella.*

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## DOÑA JUANA MANUEL DE VILLENA.

### 1369.

REIGN OF ENRIQUE II. (BASTARD OF TRASTAMARA).

DOÑA JUANA, born in 1339, was the daughter of Don Juan Manuel and of Doña Blanca de la Cerda y Lara. Of royal descent on both sides,* this high-born dame was thought by Alfonso XII. a desirable match for Enrique, Count of Trastamara, the son of his beloved Leonor de Guzman. But the proud relatives of Juana shrank from an alliance even with royal blood, when illegitimate; and ambition, pointing to a seat on the throne itself, turned in disdain from the bastard to the legitimate scion of royalty. The will of the monarch would, however, in all probability, have triumphed over that of the subject had not death intervened and frustrated for a season the plans of Alfonso. No sooner had this event placed the crown on young Pedro's head than Don Fernando Manuel endeavoured to break his sister's contract with Enrique, and effect an alliance with the sovereign himself, or at

* Her father was the grandson of St. Ferdinand, her mother was the grand-daughter of the eldest son of Alfonso the Astrologer, and daughter of the Infante Don Fernando de la Cerda.

least with his cousin, Don Fernando, the Infante of Aragon.

Leonor, aware of the intentions of the "high-reaching" noble, in her affectionate solicitude for her son's interests, hastened the nuptials, and probably her own violent death. The lady being under the charge of Leonor, shared her imprisonment. The marriage was performed in secret, the bride probably preferring the gentle and insinuating Enrique to his brave but hasty and impetuous brother. Far from strengthening her own cause by her son's marriage with the wealthy heiress, this impolitic and dangerous step completed the ruin of Leonor, and confirmed the enmity between the brothers. Don Pedro, who had resolved on the enlargement of Leonor, now left her entirely at his mother's disposal, and the Queen ordered her to be more strictly confined, and finally strangled. Henry fled to Asturias with his bride, and two attendants, and fortified his town of Gijon, using the jewels given to him by his mother in Seville, for the pay of his troops. Having come to terms with the King, Enrique attended his wedding in Valladolid, and, together with his brother Tello, was charged with the defence of the frontiers of Portugal against any attack from Alburquerque. While there, the brothers entered into a secret league with the very man against whom they were sent.

The King, however, was informed of these negotiations, and it was then that, to strengthen himself against his brothers, and punish Don Tello, he gave Doña Isabel de Lara in marriage to his cousin, Juan of Aragon, and ordered that henceforth he and his wife should be called the Lords of Biscay, though that title belonged to the wife of Don Tello, she being the elder of the sisters.

The Infantes of Aragon were not more faithful than the Guzmans, and, joining with the latter, formed the league that in Toro dictated laws to their sovereign. The next fact we find mentioned of the Countess Juana is her imprisonment in Toro, by Pedro's order, after the taking of that city. Enrique himself had escaped to Galicia, and it is probable that he had found it impossible to take his Countess with him, as we cannot otherwise account for his leaving her to the mercy of Pedro. Juana remained a close prisoner during her husband's absence in France, from whence, at the request of the King of Aragon, he returned to assist that sovereign in his wars against Castile, in 1357. It was in this year that Pedro Carrillo, a devoted adherent of the Count of Trastamara, determined to make an attempt to free Doña Juana, and bring her to Aragon. To this end he sent to propose his services to Don Pedro, offering, in case the King would endow him with lands in Castile, to abandon the banner of the Count, and transfer his allegiance to himself. Don Pedro accepted the proffer. Carrillo came to Castile, and was rewarded with the town of Tamariz, and its territory.

His scheme succeeded, and in the month of December having contrived to obtain access to the Countess, and procured her a disguise, they escaped together to Aragon. The rage of Don Pedro, at finding himself thus duped by the traitor, can be better imagined than described. On the 24th of August, of the following year, Doña Juana gave birth, in the town of Epila, to Don Juan, who succeeded his father. The success that during a short time attended the arms of Enrique, assisted by his French allies, seemed decisive, and he was crowned in

Las Huelgas, in the spring of 1366; on which occasion he sent for his wife and his two children, Juan and Leonor, who had remained in Aragon.

With Doña Juana* came the Archbishop of Zaragosa, Don Lopez Fernandez de Luna, and other nobles, who accompanied Doña Leonor, the Infanta of Aragon, who the sovereigns had agreed should marry the Infante Don Juan, son of the Count, or as he now called himself, Enrique II. The little betrothed bride was of the same age as the bridegroom, having been born in February of the same year.

The stay of Juana in Castile was short, for Enrique losing, on the 3rd of April, of the following year, the battle of Najera, his consort and children were forced to make a precipitate retreat into Aragon. The numerous suite of ladies and followers that had contributed to add splendour to the Court of Doña Juana held in Burgos, now only increased the difficulties and perils of her flight; and when, after escaping many dangers, the fugitives at length reached Zaragosa, it was to meet that cold reception with which worldly friends greet the fallen. The unhappy Juana oppressed with grief, arising from her ignorance of what had befallen Enrique, of whom she had received no tidings since the battle, was treated with small courtesy by Don Pedro IV., who annulling the marriage contract of his daughter, took her from Juana, and entered into a negotiation with his namesake of Castile, and

* Previous to her departure from Aragon, Juana was made by the King to swear on the Gospel that she would do all in her power to induce Henry to keep the agreement he had entered into with that sovereign. Henry had promised, in return for the assistance afforded him in the usurpation of the crown of Castile, to give to the King of Aragon the kingdom of Murcia, and a large portion of that of Toledo.

the Prince of Wales. Many individuals at the Court of Aragon favoured the cause of the legitimate Prince, and bore ill will to Enrique for his participation in the murder of Don Fernando, Infante of Aragon.*

Juana soon found that her residence there was no longer safe, and consequently determined to join her husband in France, whither he had gone to solicit fresh aid. The French monarch who had received Henry with great kindness, and furnished him with large sums of money, now gave him the castle of Paupertius, on the frontiers of Aragon, as a residence for his family; and Henry having again raised troops, with his assistance, once more returned to Castile with his consort and son, leaving his daughter, the Infanta Leonor, in France.

On their way through Aragon, Juana was rejoined by the attendants she had been obliged to leave in Zaragosa. In Burgos, Henry captured the King of Naples, one of Pedro's allies, and sent him to the castle of Curiel, where he remained until ransomed by his wife, Queen Juana, for 80,000 dollars. Doña Juana and her son remained in Toledo until after the murder in Montiel of King Pedro, when Henry remained in peaceful possession of the throne.

Toledo having surrendered to the victor, Juana removed to that city, where the Court was established. The new sovereigns having sent to France for their daughter Leonor, that Princess, as a pledge of peace between Portugal and Castile, was offered to King Ferdinand; but, though the marriage was agreed upon in March, 1371, it never was carried into effect, the Portuguese sovereign that very year acknowledging his marriage with Doña

* *Vide* Queens of Aragon, reign of Pedro IV.

Leonor de Meneses, though that lady was already the wife of Don Lorenzo de Acuña. Leonor was betrothed two years afterwards to Don Carlos III., King of Navarre; and from this marriage, which took place in 1375, was born the Princess Blanche, who inherited Navarre, and became the first wife of John I. of Aragon.

The Queen witnessed the nuptials of both her children in Soria, Prince Juan marrying the Infanta of Aragon, formerly betrothed to him. The nuptials were attended by nobles of the three kingdoms, and celebrated with great magnificence, the rejoicings lasting throughout the month of May; but although the death of his brother, Don Pedro, seemed to ensure him the possession of the throne which he had so long coveted, the usurper was beset with difficulties. The Portuguese sovereign, the lawful heir of the crown of Castile,* still asserted his claim; and though, in 1373, Henry had retaliated with such success as to penetrate even to Lisbon, it was neither permanent nor advantageous. The Pope, interposing his mediation, that year obtained a temporary reconciliation, but the treacherous Portuguese continued to annoy the Castilian during the whole of his reign.

To ensure the continuance of peace between the kingdoms, a double matrimonial alliance was agreed on.†

* Ferdinand, King of Portugal, was the grandson of Beatrix, daughter of Sancho the Brave, King of Castile, who had married Alfonso IV., King of Portugal.

† Sancho de Guzman, brother of Henry, married Beatrix, sister of Ferdinand, and at the same time Alfonso, an illegitimate son of Henry, by Elvira Iñigues, was betrothed to Isabel, an illegitimate daughter of Ferdinand. Alfonso, being exceedingly adverse to the marriage, in 1375 repaired to the Courts of France and Rome to solicit the interference of the King and Pope, but both advising him to submit to his father's will, he returned, and in 1378 was married.

The Duke of Lancaster also urged the claims of his wife Constance, and though he could do little but threaten during the life of Henry, the latter had much ado to avert the storm, which he was only enabled to effect by the assistance of his constant friend, the King of France, who kept the English so much engaged that they found it impossible to carry the war into Castile. The marriage of his daughter with the Prince of Navarre did not ensure peace with that country, hostilities recommencing in 1378. Charles having by secret treaties engaged to support the English in their war with France, the ally of Castile, a dispute for the town of Logroña was the pretence made use of for breaking with Enrique, but the latter was successful, as he recovered several places from the King of Navarre.

Enrique died on the 29th of May, 1379, after an illness of twelve days, in the forty-seventh year of his age; and was interred in a chapel constructed by his orders in the church of St. Mary, in Toledo. Though success crowned the efforts of this usurper of the crown of Castile, his character did not render him more worthy of it than his predecessor. Pedro was unfortunate, and his evil traits have been portrayed in their worst light, while the few good qualities of Enrique have been dwelt on *con amore* by panegyrists whom that Prince's liberality encouraged and rewarded. His numerous illegitimate children by different mistresses prove him still less scrupulous on that point than Pedro; and his conduct in many instances shows him to have been treacherous and cruel.* His

* An instance of Enrique's perfidy and cruelty is exhibited in his treatment of Don Martin Lopez. This faithful adherent of an unfortunate master had been entrusted with the care of Don Pedro's children, and was Governor of the town of Carmona, which he bravely defended against the

liberality has been exceedingly extolled, and it is undeniable that he lavished his largesses without stint, to ensure the success of his schemes and reward his partisans. In person, he was below the middle height, well made, with a fair complexion and brown hair. Juana survived her husband but a short time, dying March 27th, 1381. She was interred by the side of her husband, in the dress of the nuns of the order of St. Clair, which she had worn from the period of the death of Enrique.

In the schism which divided the church, arising from the rival claims of Urban VI. and the anti-Pope Clement to the throne of St. Peter, Enrique had carefully abstained from declaring in favour of either; and the difference remaining still undecided at his death, the Queen in her last illness was troubled with conscientious scruples. To relieve her indecision, she dispatched a messenger to a Portuguese Franciscan friar, who was said to be endowed with the spirit of prophecy. The Queen's envoy met the seer in Guimaracus, and without waiting to be interrogated, the latter addressed him as follows: "I am aware of thy errand, and by whom thou wast sent. Know that the illustrious Queen, by whose orders thou hast sought me, is now no more, and that her son, following evil counsel, will support the pretensions of Clement."

The soothsayer had doubtless procured information from good authority, for the sequel proved the truth of his

usurper, in behalf of Don Pedro's heirs, after the death of that sovereign, in 1371. After a desperate resistance, the want of provisions forcing him to come to terms, Don Martin capitulated, his life and liberty being guaranteed by the King, who took an oath to that effect on the Holy Gospels. No sooner, however, had Enrique entered the place, than he sent the Governor and the Chancellor of the late King to Seville, with orders for their immediate execution, and both gentlemen were beheaded.

assertions. Juana had been endowed with great munificence by her husband, and her revenues exceeded those of any of her predecessors. Aware that these extravagant donations might prove a dangerous precedent, Henry, in his will, counselled his son against being equally liberal to his own consort. Juana is called by the chroniclers a most pious, charitable and noble lady, but nothing is said of her personal appearance.

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## LEONOR OF ARAGON.

### 1379.

REIGN OF JUAN I.

THIS lady, whose nuptials with the Crown Prince of Castile, on the 18th of June, 1374, have been recorded in the preceding reign, was the daughter of Pedro IV., King of Aragon, and of his third wife, Leonor of Sicily. The dower of the Aragonese Princess was 80,000 florins. Four years after the marriage, on the death of Enrique, in 1379, Juan and Leonor were solemnly crowned in Las Huelgas de Burgos,* and on the 4th of October, of the same year, the Queen gave birth to her first child, Enrique, who inherited the crown. On the 27th of November, of the following year, was born her second son, Ferdinand, who subsequently ascended the throne of Aragon.

* On the occasion of this ceremony, the King conferred with his own hand the honour of knighthood upon one hundred young nobles; and the citizens vied with each other in magnificence and splendour.—ED.

The birth of her third child, a daughter, cost the Queen her life, on the 13th of September, 1382. The infant was named Leonor, after its mother, whom it survived but a short time. The piety and charity of this young Queen, cut off in the flower of her age, is greatly eulogised by several authors, and it is recorded that she spent all her income in deeds of benevolence. Her religious scruples were carried to such an extreme, that at one time, though greatly in want of money, she positively refused to accept the voluntary offer from the Jews who inhabited the towns that formed part of her jointure, "*lest the money might prove accursed, and the donors in their hearts curse the King and her children.*"

That a miracle might not be wanting to prove the virtue of this Queen, the chronicle of Santo Domingo records the following one.

The King having conceived some injurious thoughts of his consort, was visited one night while on his way returning from Carrioncillo, near Medina del Campo, by no less a person than the Apostle St. Andrew. The celestial visitant reprimanding the King for his suspicion of his wife, assured him that it was totally unfounded, she being a perfect model of chastity, and of every other virtue. As a proof of his assertion, and that no doubt might remain on the King's mind of his own miraculous appearance, the Saint foretold the birth on a certain day of the Infante Fernando, and the event verified the prediction. The apparition was so satisfactory to Juan, that from that time he never again indulged a suspicion of his Queen's fair fame.

# DOÑA BEATRIX.

## 1383.

### (HEIRESS OF PORTUGAL.)

REIGN OF JUAN I.

THIS Princess, the daughter of Fernando I., King of Portugal, by his Queen Leonor de Meneses, before her marriage with Juan, had been successively promised to that sovereign's brother,* to his two sons, and to the Earl of Cambridge. The death of his first wife, Leonor, leaving the King of Castile a widower at the early age of twenty-four, the King of Portugal proposed that the peace between Castile and Portugal should be cemented by the marriage of his daughter with the father instead of the son, who was as yet but an infant; and the conditions proving very satisfactory to Juan, the nuptials were celebrated at Badajoz, on the 17th May, 1383. A dispensation had previously been procured from the Pope, as the parties were second cousins. By the marriage contract, Beatrix, being the only child, was to inherit the kingdom of Portugal, the administration of which was, however, to be left after the death of Ferdinand, to his Queen, should she survive him; and the issue of Beatrix and Juan, whether a son or a daughter, was to inherit the kingdom, and bear the title of sovereign from the age of fourteen, its parents from that

* Don Fadrique, Duke of Benavento, son of Henry II., by a noble lady, Doña Beatrix Ponce de Leon.

period ceasing to entitle themselves King and Queen of Portugal.

Ferdinand died the very year of this marriage, and his death gave occasion for a renewal of the war. Juan, regardless of the conditions stipulated in the treaty, immediately entered Portugal at the head of a strong force to sustain his claim. Though many of the nobles admitted the justice of his pretensions, and the Queen Dowager caused her daughter to be proclaimed in Lisbon, the majority of the towns, with that hatred of the Castilian sway which has ever characterized the Portuguese, proclaimed Don Juan* a bastard-brother of the late King, Regent of the kingdom.

The Duke of Lancaster now offered his aid to the new Regent, and concluded an alliance with him by which they mutally engaged to defend each other's claims, and overwhelm the Castilian sovereign. Fortune appeared to desert Juan, whose army met everywhere with defeat; and though his mother-in-law had declared in his favour, and voluntarily given up to him the administration, she was so strongly suspected of bad faith, that he caused her to be arrested and conveyed to Castile.

In 1385, the states of Coimbra proclaimed the Regent King; and that Prince, who had secured the co-operation of the English, by his marriage with Phillippa, the daughter of the Duke of Cambridge, showed himself equal to the task of defending his newly-acquired dignity. Cool, energetic, courageous, unscrupulous, and crafty, he successfully foiled all the plans of his young, rash and inexperienced rival. A great action fought between 10,000

* Not the youngest son of Pedro I. and Ines de Castro, but another illegitimate son of that monarch by a lady of Galicia.

men on the side of the Portuguese, and 30,000 on that of the Castilian, decided the contested point in favour of the former.

This battle, which took place near Albajarota, was won by the Portuguese, in consequence of the strength of the position in which they had entrenched themselves, and by the rashness and inferiority of tactics of the Spaniards, who confiding in their numerical superiority, disdained all the precautions that might have ensured their success. Two thousand French knights who fought as allies of the Castilians, and bore the brunt of the battle, suffered severely. The loss of the Castilian army was enormous, the greater part of the cavalry and 10,000 of the infantry remaining on the field of battle. The contest was, however, continued for some time, until the plague breaking out in the army of the Portuguese sovereign, and making great ravages among his English allies, overtures of peace were made by the Duke and accepted by the Castilian.

The conditions of this treaty, which was concluded towards the close of 1387, were that Catherine, daughter of the Duke, by his wife Constanza, should be betrothed to Henry, son of Juan, and if the latter should die before the period at which the age of the parties would allow of the marriage being celebrated, his place should be filled by his brother Ferdinand, that Prince being bound to remain free and unengaged until Henry should have attained his fourteenth year; that Constanza herself (the daughter of Pedro the Cruel) should receive in fief, several towns in Castile, and a revenue of 40,000 francs per annum, while the Duke should receive 600,000 in gold by instalments, to enable him to defray the expenses of the war; that both Constanza and her husband should

renounce all claim to the throne of Castile; and that sixty men of note should be given up as hostages for the fulfilment of the three first conditions. In the spring of the following year, the betrothals took place, the bride being in her fourteenth year, and the bridegroom in his ninth.

These conditions were extremely onerous to Castile, impoverished by these long wars, and it was exceedingly difficult to raise so large a sum; but, on the other hand, it was of great advantage to settle the claims of the daughter of Pedro, as these pretensions were likely to prolong the contest for an indefinite period. The treaty having been signed, and the betrothals solemnized, Juan received the visit of his cousin, Constance, whom he entertained in Medina del Campo, in the November of that year.

In token of amity and goodwill, besides sundry rich jewels, the King presented to Constance the town of Huete and its revenues, to be possessed during her life, which the Duchess, on her side, reciprocated by the gift of a magnificent gold crown, studded with valuable gems, which she had brought from England to be used at her own coronation. This diadem had belonged to her father. A truce was also agreed on with the King of Portugal; and Castile was beginning to taste the blessings of the peace which it so much needed, when the premature death of Juan threatened to involve the kingdom in the evils attending the minority of Princes.

At the period of the conquest of Spain by the Moors, a small number of Christians had passed over to Africa, and obtained permission from the Emperor of Morocco to reside in his dominions, and to retain their own creed, customs, and manners. Of these Christians, called by

the Moors, Farfanes, fifty cavaliers had been invited by Juan to settle in Castile, and as an inducement, he had offered to endow them with lands sufficient for their honourable maintenance. The offer having been accepted, the King, on their arrival, sallied forth to receive them, and to witness the equestrian exercises for which they were celebrated. Having for some time remained a spectator of their feats, he determined to join them, being himself an expert horseman. The ground over which he had to pass had been recently ploughed, and when the King set spurs to his spirited steed, the animal stumbled, and throwing his rider, fell heavily over him. When his attendants extricated the sovereign, it was found that life was extinct.

Such was the tragical end of a Prince, who, if he did not exhibit great abilties, was kind-hearted, gentle, willing to take advice, and tinctured by no vices. Liberal, high-minded, and benevolent, his reign is stained by no bloody deed or flagrant act of injustice. His liberality and courteous conduct to the King of Armenia, whose liberty he obtained from the Soldan of Egypt, and whom he hospitably entertained and largely endowed, constitute one of the many generous acts of kindness that this Prince lavished on the unfortunate.

Juan was of small stature, with a fair complexion and brown hair, and little more than thirty-two years of age. His constitution was exceedingly delicate, and he was subject to several infirmities. His tragical death, which occurred on the 9th October, 1390, was concealed from the public by the Archbishop of Toledo until he had taken measures to secure the succession of the young Enrique. A tent was pitched on the spot, and the body deposited in it attended by leeches, while messengers were dis-

patched to the Queen, informing her of the real nature of the catastrophe, and to the cities, towns, lords, prelates, and gentlemen, with tidings that the King was seriously ill, and reminding them of their oath of allegiance to his heir, should the event prove fatal. This done, the body was conveyed to a chapel belonging to the Archbishop in Alcalá de Henares, whither the Queen immediately repaired, overwhelmed with grief. The corpse, attended by the Queen and many nobles, was then removed to Toledo, where it was interred in the Church of St. Mary. Though thus early left a widow, Beatrix never would consent to a second marriage. She received many offers; among others, one from the Duke of Austria, as late as the year 1409, after she had been eighteen years a widow, during which time she resided on her own domains, where she continued until her death.

Juan, in his will, dated June 21st, 1385, left his consort three hundred thousand maravedis a year, which she was to have in addition to the revenues of the towns and villages belonging to her, that she might "*be enabled honourably to maintain her state.*" The royal testator laid his injunctions on Prince Enrique, her step-son, to honour and respect her as his mother, pay her the revenues assigned her, and demand from her no account of the jewels, crowns, diadems, and precious stones, he had bestowed on her. Henry obeyed these commands to the letter; and in his own will orders that his "*mother,* the Queen Doña Beatrix, continue to receive her yearly allowance."

The date of the death of Beatrix is not recorded.

# CATHERINE OF LANCASTER.

(QUEEN CONSORT.)

1390.

(QUEEN REGENT.)

1407.

REIGN OF HENRY III., THE INFIRM.

THE betrothals of Catherine, daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Constance of Castile, with the young heir of the throne of Castile, have been recorded in the annals of the preceding reign. On the occasion of this happy union, which put an end to the war that for so long a time had desolated Castile, Henry and his bride were created Prince and Princess of Asturias, this being the first time that the titles of Prince and Princess were used in Spain.

The tragical death of Juan, in 1390, calling Henry to the throne at the early age of eleven, occasioned the dissensions incidental on the minority of Princes, and many were the disputes that took place ere it was decided what form of government should be adopted, until the King should attain his majority. After several changes in 1392, the Cortes at Burgos decreed that twelve governors should be chosen, six of whom should exercise the authority delegated to them during half the year, and the other six during the remaining six months. After some demurring and altercation as to who should have the

priority, the affair was settled. Though there were not wanting disaffected spirits, among whom Fadrique, Duke of Benavento played an important part, and created some disturbance; it was finally appeased without any effusion of blood, and the truces with the Kings of Granada and Aragon having been renewed, the peace of the kingdom continued unbroken.

The most important event that occurred during this minority, was the rising of the people in many large towns against the Jews, who were the agents and receivers of the royal revenues, and contributions from the towns. Their rapacity having irritated the populace, who were moreover incited by the preaching of a fanatical Archdeacon of Ecija, of whom one of the Spanish writers says, "he was one more holy than wise," they had well nigh exterminated the race. Many were massacred, numbers, in order to escape, became Christians; while others, to save themselves and some portion of their property, were obliged to have recourse to the protection of some great noble, of whom they purchased their safety at so enormous a rate as to reduce themselves to poverty.

In 1393, Henry having attained the age of fourteen, assumed the administration, and put an end to the regency. Though of so delicate a constitution as to cause him to be surnamed the Infirm, the King lacked neither energy nor firmness; but the evils which he had to correct were too deeply rooted to be easily eradicated, and his reign was too short to enable him to effect any lasting good. His uncles, Fadrique, Duke of Benavento; and Alfonso, Count of Gijon, continued for some time to disturb the public peace, and the King's liberality and moderation towards them alone prevented them from breaking out into open rebellion.

During his short career, Enrique won the love of the nation by his zeal for the public weal. He caused many excellent laws and regulations to be enacted for the better and more impartial administration of justice and restraining the rapacity and extortions of the revenue officers. Unfortunately for the nation, he was, while preparing on the frontiers to war with the Moors of Granada, attacked by a disease, which, having no strength of constitution to resist it, carried him off on the 26th of December, 1406.

Of the Queen little is recorded during the life of Enrique, but after his death, she was called to play an important part as co-Regent of the kingdom, and guardian of her son Juan, who at the time of his father's demise had not attained his second year. Catherine, during the first eight years of her marriage had been childless, but at the end of that period she gave birth to the Infanta Maria, proclaimed heiress to the crown, of which the subsequent birth of a brother deprived her. This Princess, who was born in Segovia, November 14, 1401, married Alfonso V., King of Aragon, her cousin.* The second child of Catherine, the date of whose birth is not recorded, was also a daughter, Catherine, who married her cousin, Don Enrique, brother of Alfonso of Aragon. Several years had elapsed since the birth of the two Infantas, and all hopes of a male heir to the crown had ceased, the King's health becoming daily more delicate, while the Queen had grown exceedingly corpulent, when she at length gave birth to a son, on the 6th of March, 1405, in the town of Toro. The joy of both parents was excessive, but especially that of the Queen, who immediately caused letters to be written in her name to all the chief towns of

* *Vide* Annals of the Queens of Aragon.

the kingdom, imparting the tidings, and ordering the customary rejoicings on the occasion. On the 12th of May of the same year, the Prince was sworn to as heir with extraordinary pomp.

Though deprived of his father at so early an age, the loss did not affect the interests of the infant King, being supplied, fortunately for himself and the nation, by an uncle whose zeal for the interests of both Prince and people could only be equalled by his ability. To the prudence, forbearance, judgment, and military zeal of the Infante Ferdinand, Castile was indebted for the comparative quiet and prosperity which she enjoyed during the first nine years of the minority of a Prince whose subsequent reign was to prove so disastrous. The deceased King's will named his brother Ferdinand, and his consort, Queen Catherine, co-Regents of the kingdom, and guardians of his children; and the choice met the approval of the nation. There were not wanting, however, restless and disaffected spirits to whom any change was a relief from the monotony of order and quiet, and who sought to induce the Infante to place on his own head the crown of his nephew, but he turned a deaf ear to all proposals of that nature, and gave his whole attention to consolidating the throne, which he might easily have usurped. Had the Queen shown equal good sense and firmness, both would have been spared many petty vexations, but unfortunately Catherine, with the best intentions, often acted with strange inconsistency, from her too easy compliance with the suggestions of those to whom she became attached.

On the death of Henry, the most friendly messages were exchanged between his widow and his brother, the former professing herself, in her affliction, fortunate that

Heaven should have left her the support of one whom henceforth she would hold in the light of a brother, son, and dear friend, and Ferdinand replying in terms of great amity and respect. The only clause of the late King's will to which the Queen objected, was one by which two nobles, Juan de Velasco and Diego Lopez Destuñiga, were named as tutors of the young King, and were to have the charge of his person. To this Catherine was exceedingly opposed, declaring that she, who had given birth to the Prince, was entitled to have the care of him. After some debate, the Queen obtained her wish, the appointed tutors agreeing to relinquish their claims, and to receive as a compensation for the honour and emoluments of the forfeited post, 12,000 florins from the Queen, who thought she could not purchase too dearly the privilege of keeping her son under her own charge. This point settled, the Regents took the customary oaths, binding themselves to maintain the kingdom undivided, to keep and respect the *fueros* and privileges of the people, to guard the King's person from harm, and to protect his interests, governing with justice and equity, and ordering all things to his honour and glory, until he should have attained his fourteenth year.

Matters went on smoothly only for a short space of time. Catherine, with the royal Infante had taken up her residence in the Alcazar of Segovia, attended by a numerous suite of noble dames and gentlemen, the chief of whom were Gomez Carillo de Cuenca charged with the young King's education, Alfonso Garcia de Cuellar, his treasurer and Alcalde of the royal residence, Leonor, daughter of the Duke of Benavento, and wife of the Adelantado, Pero Manriquez, the Countess his wife, and many others of high station. Of all the noble ladies in attendance on Cathe-

rine, none had attained the degree of favour enjoyed by Leonor Lopez, daughter of Don Martin Lopez, who in the reign of Pedro had been Master of the Order of Alcantara. This lady had ingratiated herself with Catherine, and acquired so unbounded an influence over her, that if her royal mistress gave an order, or took a resolution, without previously consulting the favourite, and obtaining her sanction, the latter insolently countermanded it. Thus the well-concerted measures of the Infante Fernando frequently met a check in their execution, from the unrestrained authority of the minion, and the consequence was that the union between the Regents —an union so necessary to the proper administration of public affairs—seemed in danger of being materially impaired by the intrigues of the meddling favourite, who even endeavoured to create ill-feeling between the Queen and her brother-in-law, by instilling into the mind of her credulous dupe suspicions of his ulterior plans.

Ferdinand was at this time preparing for war with the Moors of Granada, and though his annoyance was great on finding his efforts for the public good frequently foiled by the impertinent and ill-judged interference of Leonor, he never allowed his temper to be irritated so far as to come to an open rupture with the Queen; though a coolness ensued, which would have proved dangerous to the welfare of all, had not the council, foreseeing the evils that would ensue from its continuation, expostulated with the Queen, and, having convinced her of her error, obtained the exile from Court of Doña Leonor. The success of this timely interposition, proves Catherine to have been open to conviction, and though weak, not obstinate. Having thus thwarted the views of the interested sycophants who had endeavoured to embroil him with the

Queen-mother, Fernando pursued with vigour the war with the Moors, obtaining signal advantages and taking many places from them. In the division the Regents had made of the administration, according to the clause to that effect in the late King's will, the Infante had the provinces of the seat of war, and remained in Andalusia, from April of 1407 until the spring of the year 1408, when he rejoined the Court assembled in Guadalajara, to concert measures for the continuation of the war. During this year, a truce of eight months was granted to the King of Granada, at his earnest solicitation.

In the following year the betrothals of the Infanta Maria, the King's eldest sister, with Alfonso, eldest son of the Infante Fernando, were celebrated, in compliance with the will of the late King. In February of 1410, the Infante again renewed the war with the Moors, which he prosecuted with such success that in 1411 he crowned himself with laurels by the conquest of Antequera. Having halted at Seville on his return, he made a triumphant entrance on the 14th of October; and from thence proceeding to Valladolid, he was warmly received by the Queen, who in the presence of the Court, honoured him with an embrace, and the kiss of peace, as the King had done before her. Doña Leonor Lopez, whose ambitious spirit could ill brook her exile, wrote, in 1412, to the Infante, entreating the intercession of the individual against whom she had used her arts when in power, that she might again be received into the Queen's service and good graces.

To this request the Infante, though he had weighty reasons for disliking the lady, returned a kind answer, purporting that she should come to Cuenca, and consult with him what it was best to do. Catherine, being advised that her quondam favourite was on her way from

Cordova to Cuenca to see Don Fernando, immediately wrote to the latter, requesting that he would send her back the instant she arrived; and declaring that if she dared venture to appear in her own presence, she would have her burnt. The virulence of the Queen's hatred towards her once loved attendant was in proportion to the affection she had formerly borne her, and proves her to have lacked a well-balanced mind, and to have been prone to carry all things to extremes.

Leonor, on arriving at Cuenca, had the Queen's letter communicated to her, and her disappointment and fright were so excessive, that she had well nigh sunk under the blow. Ferdinand treated her kindly, and after administering such consolation as he could without feeding hopes which would have been utterly without foundation, advised her to return immediately to Cordova, in order to avoid adding, by a dangerous persistence, to the Queen's anger; but Doña Leonor had no sooner put this wise advice in practice, than the Queen deprived her relatives of the offices which they held in her household, and in that of the King, her son. Not satisfied with this severity, Catherine dismissed from her service all those who were indebted to Leonor for their places.

The King of Aragon, Don Martin, having died without leaving any male issue, after a short interregnum, his nephew, Ferdinand, was declared the next of kin, in the male line, and heir to the crown.* In 1412 the new King passed over into Aragon, having previously named a council to continue his duties as co-Regent of Castile. As long as the life of this truly able and prudent sove-

* *Vide* Life of Doña Leonor de Alburquerque, Queen of Aragon.

reign lasted, his influence seemed to direct the councils of Castile, and maintain peace and prosperity, but with his death, in 1416, the civil broils again broke out. The friendship between Catherine and her brother-in-law, however, suffered no diminution after the accession of the latter to the throne of Aragon; and, far from showing the slightest jealousy of his elevation, she rejoiced most sincerely in it, and proved her good feeling by sending him a magnificent crown to be used at his coronation. This diadem was the same worn by King Juan I., his father.

Having been advised that the Count of Urgel was preparing to dispute Ferdinand's claim to the crown of Aragon, Catherine, unsolicited, sent four hundred lances to her brother-in-law's assistance, and a message purporting that if he required still farther aid, she would come, with her son, at the head of all the forces she could command, and rather than he should fail in asserting his rights, would sell her jewels. These tokens of amity were very satisfactory to Ferdinand, though circumstances rendered the proffered aid unnecessary.

On the death of Ferdinand, in 1416, the regency devolved entirely on Catherine (as stipulated in the will of Enrique), but Don Juan de Velasco and Don Diego Lopez de Zuñiga took advantage of it to renew their claims to the tutorship of the young King. The Archbishop of Toledo, Don Sancho de Rojas, however, presented the matter in such a light to Catherine, that she agreed to deliver the King's person to the claimants, in order that, as she declared, she might never have to reproach herself with leaving unfulfilled any clause of the late King's will; upon which the two nobles, satisfied with the Queen's ready compliance, and pleased with the

confidence reposed in them, declined accepting the honour, leaving him under her charge, and merely adding to his attendants guards of their own selection.

The factions that had arisen in Castile on the death of Ferdinand, soon extended their ramifications throughout the kingdom, and the last two years of the life of Catherine were harassed by the intrigues, complaints, and quarrels of the turbulent nobles. Her own death, which took place June 2nd, 1418, removing all restraint, left Castile a prey to the anarchy and disorder which distracted it during all the unhappy reign of her weak son. Catherine was deeply regretted, for, though not possessed of great abilities or splendid talents, she had a kind heart, and the errors into which she fell proceeded ever from want of judgment, and too ready a compliance with the wishes of those by whom she was surrounded. Her temper was even and her manners kind and affable.

Catherine was tall and handsome, and in youth, though stout, her figure was good and her carriage graceful, but as she advanced in years, she became exceedingly corpulent. Unlike the generality of Spanish sovereigns, who are noted for their sobriety, Catherine was addicted to excesses in eating, and even drinking, which doubtless hastened her end. She died of a paralytic stroke, and was interred in the royal chapel of Toledo. The qualities of the head are, however, more necessary to a sovereign than those of the heart, and the character of Catherine has been treated with little leniency by the majority of historians, who ascribe to her jealous and narrow-minded policy the weak, uncultivated intellect of her son. Enrique III. testified his want of confidence in her abilities, by the clause in his will, in which he expressly desired that his

son should be placed under the care of those therein designated, and who were men fully equal to the task of educating the heir to the crown.

Catherine, however, expressed so much repugnance to giving up her child to the guardians, and it seemed so cruel to deprive a mother of this source of gratification, that, unfortunately alike for the Prince and the nation, the Infante Fernando seconded her wishes, and they were complied with. Of a suspicious temper, Catherine was always tormented by fears that her son would be taken from her, and with this idea she kept him immured within the palace walls, neglecting his education, and preventing those whose advice and precepts would have strengthened and improved his mind, from having access to the secluded youth.

Thus Juan grew up amid the puerilities and idle pastimes of an effeminate Court, in complete ignorance of the high duties which awaited him; and imbibed from his mother that pernicious weakness which made him the tool of the parasites by whom he was surrounded. When, at her death, he was brought out, and made to exhibit himself to the people, it seemed like a second birth, so ignorant was he of the world beyond the palace gates.

Much of Catherine's popularity was due to her being the granddaughter of Pedro. Many, especially among the middle and lower classes, regarding the memory of this unfortunate monarch with peculiar veneration, considered his descendant as the legitimate heiress of the crown of Castile. The English blood of John of Gaunt predominated, however, in Catherine, whose fair hair, blonde complexion, and stout figure, betokened her paternal

origin, and northern birth-place, while her tastes and inclinations essentially differed from those of her royal grandfather, noted like the generality of the Spanish sovereigns for his sobriety.

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## DOÑA MARIA OF ARAGON.

### 1419.

REIGN OF JUAN II.

On the death of Catherine, the King of Portugal, Juan I. endeavoured to negotiate the marriage of his daughter Leonor with the young King of Castile, then thirteen years of age, but he encountered an unsurmountable barrier to his project, in Don Sancho de Rojas, the Archbishop of Toledo. This prelate, who was indebted for his elevation to the Infante Fernando, was devoted to the interests of the royal house of Aragon, and employed the power and influence which he had acquired under Catherine, to place a daughter of that Prince on the Castilian throne.

Several of the high barons, jealous of the favour enjoyed by the Archbishop, endeavoured to frustrate his schemes, favouring the alliance with Portugal; but Don Sancho being backed by the Dowager Queen of Aragon and her sons, who, endowed with vast domains in Castile, the land of their birth, possessed great influence in that Court, was successful, and on the 20th October, 1418, Maria, daughter of Ferdinand I., King of Aragon, and of Doña Leonor de Alburquerque, was led to the altar by the young King. The parties were first cousins, but dispensations

had then become so common, that no scruples were entertained on that score. The nuptials, graced by the presence of the Dowager Queen of Aragon, her sons, the Infantes Juan, Enrique and Pedro, together with the principal nobles of Castile and Aragon, were celebrated with the greatest magnificence, and the festivities usual on such occasions in Medina del Campo.

The Court then removing to Madrid, the Cortes was summoned, and in the spring of the following year, Juan having attained his majority, was solemnly entrusted with the government.

On the 7th March, 1419, began the disastrous reign of the hitherto nominal King, Juan II., or rather that of his favourites. Of these, the most conspicuous, not only for the important part which he enacted, but also for his brilliant accomplishments, his extraordinary rise, and sudden fall, was Don Alvaro de Luna.

This remarkable man, who, from a state of obscurity and comparative insignificance rose to the height of power, controlled during upwards of thirty years the destinies of Castile, and was in reality the real occupant of a throne from which he descended to lay his head on the block—the minion of fortune, who, in his elevation and fall, as well as in many points of character, resembled the no less celebrated Cardinal Wolsey, was the son of Don Alvaro de Luna, Lord of Cañete Jubero and Cornado, and cup-bearer of Enrique III., by a common courtesan, named Maria Cañete. The subsequent disreputable conduct of the mother causing Don Alvaro to doubt whether the child was his, he refused for some time to acknowledge him. Being unmarried, he converted his possessions into ready money, leading a gay life, without thinking of making any provision for his son,

whose life would have been spent, in all probability, in struggling with the evils attending penury, had not this fate been averted by a faithful squire, to whose care he had been confided. This man, whose name was Juan de Olio, having expostulated with Don Alvaro, to whom he represented the injustice which he was doing the boy he knew to be his own, persuaded the then dying noble to leave him a sum of eight hundred florins, the residue of the proceeds of the sale of his patrimony.

Juan de Olio then conducted his young charge to Rome, where the child was confirmed by Pope Benedict, who changed his name from Pedro to that of his father. Here he remained from the age of seven to that of eighteen, when his uncle, Don Pedro de Luna, the Archbishop, brought him back to Spain, and obtained for him a place as gentleman of the bed-chamber or page to the young King, in 1408. Educated in all the refinement of the Court of Rome, skilled in all the mental and bodily accomplishments of that day, the best horseman, most adroit swordsman, most elegant dancer, in his own country, a poet and a musician, endowed by nature with a good voice, and possessing amiable manners and an insinuating address, Don Alvaro could not fail to attract notice at Court; and by the time the sovereign had attained his majority had so completely won his favour, that Juan would do nothing without his advice and consent.

Nor was Don Alvaro less fortunate in ingratiating himself with the ladies, and the favours which they lavished upon him, though highly gratifying to his vanity, at times placed the recipient in rather embarrassing situations. From a dilemma of this nature, which occurred during the regency of Queen Catherine, his firmness and decision

with difficulty extricated him. Among the ladies who appeared most charmed with the grace and gallant bearing of the King's favourite page, was Doña Ines de Torres, one of the Queen's attendants, and so unguarded was she in her tokens of regard, that she roused the jealousy of her intended husband, Don Juan Alvarez de Osorio, one of the most influential nobles in Castile. The irritated lover carried his complaints to the Queen, and succeeded in enlisting her sympathy. He had, moreover, the art to persuade her that the attentions of Don Alvaro had won the heart, and affected the reputation of Doña Constanza Barba, another lady of the royal suite, attached to the service of the Infanta Catalina. The Queen-mother, anxious to sustain the dignity of her household, which she deemed sorely compromised by such levities, sent for the culprit, and without consulting his inclinations intimated that it was her pleasure, he should then and there prepare to marry Doña Constanza, who was preparing in the inner apartment for the ceremony. But young as he was, the minister in embryo had already higher views, and was not to be thus entrapped. Resolutely declining to comply with the Queen's peremptory command, he instantly withdrew to his own residence, refusing to return until the Queen should give up her matrimonial project. His presence was too necessary to the young sovereign to allow of his being long an exile from the palace, and Catherine was forced to accede to her son's wishes and recall his favourite companion, at the sacrifice of her own pride.

Nor did his refusal to allow himelf to be victimized injure him with the ladies, who seemed, on the contrary, greatly pleased that he should have preserved a freedom that left hopes to all.

While he possessed all the lighter qualities of the finished cavalier, Don Alvaro lacked none of the more solid ones that befit the statesman. A profound dissembler, while he carefully veiled his own intentions, he was gifted with the art of eliciting from others whatever it imported him to know of theirs. With a strong mind, a clear intellect, a daring, unscrupulous spirit, and an indefatigable application to business, he was peculiarly well adapted to be the minister of the indolent Juan, who signed, it is said, everything his minister desired, without casting his eye on the contents of the papers. . .

The haughty Castilian nobles could not long brook the sway of one whom his birth had placed so far beneath them, and a series of revolts and commotions was the result of their struggle to displace him.

The first disturbance of any moment was occasioned by Don Enrique, Infante of Aragon. This Prince, whom love or ambition had led to become the suitor of Catherine, the King's sister, met with a repulse from that lady, which, instead of allaying, inflamed his passion, and he determined to obtain by force of arms what was denied to his entreaties. The rage of Enrique was principally directed against Don Alvaro de Luna and his ally, Don Fernan Alfonso de Robles, whose influence in his behalf he had vainly sought to secure. Both nobles aware that Catherine wished to marry some foreign Prince, and probably desirous of thwarting the obvious ambition of Enrique, whose power this close alliance with the sovereign would still farther strengthen, upheld the Princess in her refusal.

On the 12th July, 1420, Enrique repaired to Tordesillas, where the royal family resided, at the head of three hundred lances, and accompanied by other troops fur-

hished to him by his friend Ruy Lopez Davalos, High Constable of Castile. Under pretence of taking leave of the King, previous to his departure on a visit to his mother, Leonor, the Prince forced the palace gates, and penetrating to the royal chamber, the door of which had been purposely left unguarded by the groom of the stole, who was an accomplice, found the King asleep, as also his inseparable companion, Don Alvaro, who lay on a mat at the foot of the royal couch. The favourite, roused by the noise, and seeing the armed followers of the Infante, at once perceived that resistance was vain, and repressing all appearance of fear or resentment, calmly remonstrated with them for the want of respect they manifested in thus approaching their lord, the King. His prudence saved him from imprisonment. The King himself greatly agitated and incensed, exclaimed, "Cousin, what mean ye? what would ye do?" To which the Infante replied, "Sir, I come to do you good service, and to put away from you some who do ugly and base things against you, and therefore I would free your grace from subjection, and have arrested here in your palace Juan Hurtado de Mendoza and his nephew, for reasons which I will relate to your grace."

The customary excuse of traitors, that all is for the King's service, was no blind even for Juan, but he had no alternative save to submit, as he found that, as the Prince asserted, Hurtado had been arrested by some of his attendants while asleep with his wife in one of the royal apartments. To pacify the King, his favourite, Don Alvaro, was not only left to him, but he was advised to keep him as one who loved him well, while at the same time the power of the favourite was retrenched by the exile of his adherents and allies. The young Queen and

the Princess Catherine were exceedingly alarmed by the outcries and disturbance attending the arrest of the several nobles in the palace, and remained shut up in their private apartments, from whence Catherine, apprehending that she was the secret object of the outrage herself, contrived during the confusion to escape, and to take refuge in the convent of St. Clair. Enrique having removed from the sovereign's household all those whom he deemed hostile to his projects, and replaced them with creatures of his own, removed Juan and the Queen to Avila. Previous to the departure of the royal *cortège*, the Queen was persuaded to send for Catherine to come and join her, but the Princess replied that she would remain where she then was.

The Queen next went in person to the convent, but she was obliged to return alone, as no solicitations could induce Catherine to leave it. The Bishop of Palencia, a friend of Enrique, then ordered the Abbess, who was in his jurisdiction, to surrender the lady; and another of Enrique's partisans, Garcifernandez Manrique, intimated that he would pull down the convent unless she did so. The intimidated nuns entreated the Princess to save them from destruction by complying with the request made to her, and Catherine eventually yielded, stipulating, however, that she should not be compelled to marry the Infante, and that she should retain in her service Mari Barba, a faithful attendant. The royal family then set out for the Alcazar of Avila.

This audacious outrage raised the indignation of many of the nobles; and Juan, brother of Enrique, who had been to Navarre in order to celebrate his nuptials with the Infanta Blanche, hastened back to Castile, and sent letters to all the members of his party to hold themselves in readiness to rescue the King from the durance in which

his insolent cousin held him. The Dowager Queen of Aragon, alarmed at the prospect of the struggle for power between her sons, repaired to Avila, to remonstrate with Enrique, but finding him bent on pursuing his plans, returned in great sorrow to Medina del Campo, where she resided. The weak sovereign, though he at first, through Don Alvaro, had sent word to his cousin Juan to rescue him, now, yielding to the ascendancy of Enrique, issued a manifesto, purporting that he was enjoying perfect freedom.

Urged also by the Infante, the King daily importuned Catherine to accept his suit, but the Princess resolutely refused, and dispatched her faithful attendant, Mari Barba, to solicit Juan's protection. Enrique, still farther to thwart the designs of his brother Juan, caused the King to convoke a Cortes to which none of the opposite party, though bound by their rank to attend such meetings, were summoned; and the weak sovereign here again publicly avowed himself free and unrestrained in word and deed. The Queen of Aragon, advised of her brother's situation, sent ambassadors to ascertain the true state of matters, and to these he repeated his assurances of being at liberty.

Again the Dowager Queen, Leonor, interfered to restore peace, and again returned in disgust at the uselessness of her efforts. Enrique then removed his royal prisoners to Talavera, and here, at last, he obtained the hand of the changeable Catherine, who, either from fear of his power, or vanquished by his perseverance, consented to marry him. The realization of his wishes, however, caused him to lose much of what he had gained, for Juan, amid the rejoicings incidental on the nuptials, being no longer as closely watched, planned and managed, with the aid of

Don Alvaro, his escape, under pretence of hawking. Some trusty servants of Don Enrique, having suspected the King's design from his movements, returned in haste and warned their master, the Infante, who was attending mass in his wife's apartments.

Enrique and a large body of troops pursued the sovereign, who having got the start of him with his small number of attendants, possessed himself of the castle of Montalvan, and dispatched orders to the neighbouring peasantry to take up arms and assemble there for his protection. Letters were also sent to the same effect to the Infante Juan and other nobles. Previous to Enrique's departure in pursuit of his sovereign, the Queen and the Princess Catherine, fearing lest the two brothers should meet, and fatal consequences ensue, hastened to where he was preparing to take horse, regardless of the mud through which they were forced to make their way, dishevelled and unattended, and earnestly, but vainly, besought him to give up his purpose.

The Infante, arriving before Montalvan took measures to prevent all access to it; and the little garrison, which had already been increased by the arrival of fifty ballesteros, was reduced to great straits, the Infante allowing a passage to no provisions excepting what were absolutely necessary for the King himself, who daily received a fowl, a loaf, and a small silver pitcher of wine for his dinner, and the same for his supper. Juan ordered the horses to be killed, beginning with his own. A few provisions were now and then smuggled in, but they were suffering great straits, when the approach of the Infante, Don Juan, and many nobles at the head of troops, joined to the news that the whole nation, indignant at such treatment of the sovereign, would rise against him, induced Enrique to

retire. Juan was escorted back to Talavera, by his more loyal subjects in triumph. Enrique continued in arms during nearly the whole of the year 1422, though without any active demonstration of resistance beyond keeping together an armed force against the King's reiterated orders. Towards the close of the year, having ventured within the King's power, on the faith of a safe conduct, he was thrown into prison. The Infanta Catherine, hearing of her husband's arrest, took refuge in Aragon, together with the Condestable, Don Ruy Lopez Davalos. The Prince's claim to the Marquisate of Villena, which he had extorted from the King as his sister's dower, when Juan was in his power, was the pretence of his remaining in arms.

On the 5th of October of the same year, the Queen gave birth to her first child, a girl, to whom was given the name of Catherine. The royal mother had been confined in Illescas, whence, on her recovery, she proceeded to Toledo, where the Princess was to be sworn heiress. The Queen herself made her entrance on one day and the Infanta on the next, with great solemnity. In the apartment of the Alcazar a rich throne was erected for the King, and beside it was placed a state bed, magnificently adorned, for the royal babe. Around the bed stood a number of lords, ladies, and prelates, the apartment being so crowded beyond the space which etiquette decreed should remain vacant, that it was almost impossible to pass to and from it. After the customary oration had been pronounced in the King's name by the Bishop of Cuenca, the Infante, Don Juan of Aragon, the King's cousin, advanced to kiss the hand of the little Princess, and took the oath of allegiance to her as rightful heiress of the crown, should the King have no

male issue. The other nobles then followed his example, the Infante Juan receiving their oaths, and the Bishop holding the crucifix. This ceremony was followed by great rejoicings and a tournament, in which sixty gentlemen took part, besides many jousts which took place during a whole week.

In 1423, the Queen gave birth to another daughter, the Infanta Leonor, who, her elder sister dying in 1424, was in her turn sworn heiress to the crown, in Burgos, but this Princess also died young. In 1425, on the 5th of January, the nation was gratified by the birth of a Prince, who subsequently ascended the throne as Enrique IV. This Prince was sworn with still greater pomp than his sister. In the course of this year, through the influence of his brother Alfonso, the King of Aragon, the Infante Don Enrique was restored to liberty and the possession of his estates, his protracted imprisonment having almost led to a war between Aragon and Castile. In this year also, the death of his father-in-law, Charles the Noble, left the Infante Don Juan the heir, in right of his wife, of the crown of Navarre.

The excessive partiality of the King for Don Alvaro, and his prodigality towards him, had for a considerable time excited great jealousy among the nobles, and discontent in all the nation, and the murmurs and complaints growing daily more violent, Juan was obliged to yield; and the Constable was, in 1427, sentenced to exile from the Court for eighteen months. In the investigation which preceded this sentence, no charge could be brought against Don Alvaro, who was accused of no abuse of the great power that he had exercised, and who had ever shown the warmest zeal for his sovereign's interest. His

only crime, then, was the being so greatly beloved by his royal master; but this affection was no way impaired by his absence, Juan daily writing to his favourite. Don Alvaro had too many and too powerful adherents to remain long absent from Court, and but few months passed ere he was again invited to take his place in the council; but he was too politic to appear over eager, and it was found necessary to reiterate the invitation three times ere he could be prevailed upon to return. The King of Navarre, who was too much of a Castilian noble to be able to take the same interest in his kingdom that he did in the intrigues of the Court of his native land, left the government of Navarre to his wife, and remained in Castile to dispute the favour of the monarch and the administration of affairs with the favourite, and his own brother, Enrique; and the ambition of these two Princes kept the nation in continual commotion during the whole reign of the feeble Juan. Enraged at seeing the High Constable again at the head of the administration, the disaffected nobles once more formed a league, which was presided by the Kings of Aragon and Navarre, who uniting with the Infante Enrique, in 1429, invaded Castile.

The King's forces, commanded by Don Alvaro, met the leaguers near Cogolludo on the 1st of July, and the armies were preparing to engage, when Cardinal Foix, the Pope's Legate to Aragon, presented himself on the field with the crucifix in his hand, and persuaded them to refrain that day from hostilities. Doña Maria, the Queen of Aragon, who had set out in haste to prevent, if possible, this unnatural warfare between Princes so nearly connected by blood and alliance, arrived on the following day, and, having procured a tent, caused it to be pitched between

the two armies. Her negotiations were so successful that at her solicitation, backed by the persuasions of the Pope's Legate, the Aragonese King returned to his dominions without striking a blow. The conditions were, however, objected to by the Castilian monarch, who, refusing to ratify them, in his turn invaded the western frontiers of Aragon, the states of Burgos giving their sovereign the warmest support in his enterprise. Nothing of any consequence was gained; and shortly after a truce of five years was agreed on, the King of Aragon being anxious to give his undivided attention to the prosecution of his war in Naples. Affairs continued tolerably tranquil during the next ten years; for, though murmurs were rife against the King for his excessive partiality towards his minister, who was the only channel through which he could be reached, no outbreak took place during that period.

In 1431, the King repaired to Andalusia to superintend in person the war with the Moors of Granada, which was prosecuted with satisfactory success. The Queen accompanied her husband in this expedition, passing through Ciudad Real, Cordova, and Carmona, and remaining at the latter place until the close of the campaign. In the year 1434, the Court removed to Guadaloupe and thence to Madrid. The royal family were in the course of the year magnificently entertained by the High Constable in his town of Escalona, and the King also received an embassy from the King of France. Juan gave the envoys a most cordial reception in the great hall of the palace in Madrid, which, it being night, was brilliantly lighted. The King was seated on his chair of state, and at his feet was crouched an enormous lion with an embroidered collar, but with neither chain nor cord to restrain his motions,

whereupon the French were somewhat afraid to advance until encouraged to do so by the King himself. The Seneschal then knelt, and would have kissed the monarch's hand, which his majesty graciously prevented, and embraced him most cordially. Having caused the envoys to be seated on rich cushions placed on either side of his own seat, Juan inquired concerning the health of their sovereign, and also that of several nobles with whom he was acquainted. A splendid collation was then served up, and the strangers, duly escorted, took their departure. The following day they were sumptuously entertained by Don Alvaro, and subsequently by other nobles, departing at last well pleased with their reception at the Court of Castile. The object of the embassy was to renew the alliance between the two monarchs, and to solicit the aid of the Castilians in the war against England.

In December of the following year, the Queen, being at Alcala de Henares with the King and her son, received the news of the death of her mother, Doña Leonor, Dowager Queen of Aragon, at Medina del Campo. Magnificent funeral honours were performed at Alcala, and subsequently in Madrigal, whither the Queen retired to spend the season of her mourning. Doña Maria inherited from her mother the castle and town of Montaloza; and the King, ever seeking to lavish new bounties on his favourite, was exceedingly desirous that she should bestow them on Don Alvaro.

It seldom happens that the King's favourite stands equally high with the Queen, who is not unfrequently jealous that another should possess that influence which she considers should belong exclusively to herself; and to Maria, Don Alvaro was an object of dislike, if not hatred. She was, therefore, exceedingly reluctant to give up her

domains, which she was the more loth to part with, from their having belonged to her mother, and she long returned a denial to the King's request. In the spring of 1437, won by Juan's importunities, she at length gave them up, receiving instead the revenues of the town of Arevalo.

In the month of March of this year, the betrothal of her son, Prince Henry, with the Infanta Blanche of Navarre, his cousin, took place. On this occasion the Queen entered into a secret compact with the Infanta, Don Enrique of Aragon, and the King of Navarre, her brothers, the Admiral Don Fadrique, the Count of Haro, Don Pedro Fernandez de Velasco, and others, against the hated Don Alvaro de Luna. In 1440, the parties being of age, the King thought it expedient that the marriage of his son with the Infanta of Navarre should take place; and Don Pedro de Velasco, Count of Haro, Don Iñigo Lopez de Mendoza, Lord of Hita and Buytrago, and Don Alfonso de Cartagena, Bishop of Burgos, were accordingly sent to conduct the bride to Castile. These Lords met the Princess, the Queen her mother, and Prince Carlos, her brother, in Logroño, from whence the Prince returned to Navarre, and the Queen and Princess, with a numerous suite of ladies, lords, and prelates, continued their way to Castile.

On their passage through Vilhorado, a town belonging to the Count of Haro, they were magnificently entertained by its Lord; and in Briviesca, also forming part of the Count's domains, their arrival gave occasion to that noble to display his taste and wealth in fêtes unsurpassed in magnificence and originality. When within two leagues of the town they were greeted by a most novel species of entertainment, devised by the Constable. A hundred

men-at-arms appeared on the road, fifty mounted on steeds covered with red trappings, and fifty on steeds covered with white, the riders being clad in complete armour and wearing helmets with flowing plumes. As soon as this goodly band came in sight of the regal *cortège*, the horsemen divided according to their colours, the red drawing up on one side of the road, and the white on the other, and then charged furiously with their lances. These being shivered, they drew their swords and continued the combat until the signal was given by the Constable, when, wheeling round, they re-united and rode off.

The royal ladies were received in Briviesca with great pomp by the towns-people, each trade with banners, and some cunning emblematical device. These were followed by quadrilles of dancers, and then came the Jews in grand procession, with the book of their law, and the Moors in like ceremony, with the Alcoran borne in state, amid a mighty noise of tabors, kettle-drums, and trumpets. All these followed the Queen and her suite to the Count's palace, where a number of tables were set forth with all descriptions of meats and the choicest fruits, in such profusion that the like was never seen before, the guests being waited on by richly-dressed gentlemen, and pages of the Count's household. The Queen and Princess were seated at a separate table, but they insisting that their hostess should bear them company, the Countess sat with them.

The ladies and damsels of the royal suite were placed at other tables, a knight or gentil-hombre, sitting beside each lady. To those whose rank did not allow of their dining in the palace, a plentiful supply of the same dishes was sent, at their several lodgings; and this hospitable magnificence was continued during the four days that the

royal party remained in Briviesca, the Count having caused it to be proclaimed that no provisions should be sold to either Castilians or foreigners, but that the wants of all would be supplied by him at his own expense. In a lower hall of the palace, a silver fountain supplied day and night excellent wine to all who chose to drink or carry away, as best pleased them.

During the first three days the guests were entertained either with balls in the palace, or with bull-fights, mummeries, and the Moorish game of reeds. On the fourth day, they were conducted to an immense enclosure behind the palace, where a large temporary hall had been erected, at one extremity of which was a raised platform, reached by an ascent of some twenty steps, the whole being covered with green sods so closely united that the verdant carpet seemed to have been laid by the hand of nature. Here, under a magnificent canopy of crimson tapestry, were chairs of state for the royal guests, and a seat for their hostess, while a table spread with every delicacy was placed before them. Below the platform, were tables at which the other guests were placed in the same order as on the foregoing days. At one extremity of the enclosure twenty gentlemen tilted in full armour; at another was a large artificial pond wherein a number of fish of a large size had been purposely deposited, which were caught by anglers and brought to the Princess.

At another extremity of the enclosure was a wood, the trees of which had been purposely brought there for the occasion, and this forest had been stocked with a number of wild boars, bears, and deer, the whole being so enclosed as to preclude any risk of their escaping and harming the spectators. Into this forest there entered fifty huntsmen with their mastiffs and hounds, who hunted, ran down, and

killed the animals, which were presented as spoils to the Princess. And truly, to all present it appeared matter of exceeding great wonderment, to behold all the pastimes of mimic war, the chase, and fishing within that space. The tilting, hunting, and angling being finished, the tables were removed from the banqueting hall, and dancing began and lasted till dawn of day, the light of the sun having been amply compensated for by the splendid illumination. When the dancing was over, a sumptuous collation was served in the same order as before, after which the instrumental musicians and the singers were rewarded for their performances with two large bags of coin by the Count. The noble host then approaching the Princess, knelt before her, and thanking her for the honour which she had vouchsafed his House by her presence, begged her acceptance of a jewel of great price. The same ceremony was repeated to the Queen, and to every lady present a rich jewel was also given, not one being forgotten, each being presented with a diamond, emerald, or ruby ring. Every knight and gentleman in the royal *cortège* had a gift of either a fine mule, or a piece of costly brocade or rich silk.

These magnificent fêtes being ended, the *cortège* pursued its route to Burgos. Here also the royal ladies were welcomed with gay fêtes and well entertained several days, when they again set out and proceeded to Dueñas, where they were met by Prince Henry with a numerous suite of nobles and gentlemen. The bride and bridegroom exchanged costly gifts according to the custom of the age; and on the following day the Prince returned to Valladolid. The day after his departure, the Queen and the Princess resumed their journey, and when within half a league of Valladolid, they were met by the nobles and

clergy of the Court of Castile, who had sallied forth to receive them.

In Valladolid, they were welcomed by Doña Maria, the Queen of Castile, and the noblest of the Castilian ladies. The nuptials were celebrated on the 15th September, 1440, in presence of the King and Queen of Navarre, the King and Queen of Castile, and the flower of the nobility of both kingdoms. On the 6th of October the bride presented herself, for the first time since her marriage, in public, the King of Castile leading his daughter-in-law's palfrey, followed by a number of nobles on foot. The palfrey of the Queen of Castile was led by her brother, the King of Navarre. Many and brilliant were the entertainments given on this occasion of the marriage. Among others was a famous passage of arms held by Don Ruy Diaz de Mendoza, with nineteen gentlemen of his household, during forty days, against Castilians or foreigners, the condition being that each challenger should break four lances.

So many were the deaths and grievous wounds inflicted in these lists, to which a number of knights repaired to exhibit their dexterity, that the King interposed his authority, and put a stop to the perilous games, which presaged but too truly those that were to ensue in the civil war of which they were the forerunners.

The machinations of the league against the favourite minister, interrupted for a season by the nuptial festivities, were now resumed with greater activity than ever, the Prince and his mother openly declaring their enmity to Don Alvaro, and joining with the King of Navarre, the Infante Enrique, and the nobles, in demanding the expulsion from Court of a man whose chief crimes were his superiority of intellect, and the love which his sovereign

bore him. Juan, treating these insolent demands with contempt, persevered in supporting his long-tried friend; and the league resorting to open hostilities, the whole kingdom was divided into parties, some towns siding with the King, and others with the league; city after city of those that held out for the King being invested and taken by the rebels; while the Queen and her son, together with her sister Leonor, the widowed Queen of Portugal, having taken up their residence in the monastery of St. Mary, in the town of Dueñas, sent the most insolent proposals to the King, who peremptorily rejected them.

The King of Navarre and the Infante Don Enrique having effected a forcible entrance into the town of Medina, where the King and Constable then were, the latter was forced to retreat precipitately, in order to escape from the animosity of the leaguers, while the King, unable to contend against their superior forces, was compelled to accord his approval to the iniquitous sentence pronounced by the Queen and her son, who now joined their confederates in Medina, against the Constable, and which exiled him for six years from Court. Matters were quieted in appearance for a time, though in reality nothing was permanently settled. The Queen, either satisfied with the concessions she had obtained, and the prominent part she had taken in these broils, or from want of firmness to continue the opposition she had shown to the Constable, became in the year 1443, together with the King, sponsor to an infant daughter of Don Alvaro.

The incensed leaguers now held their sovereign almost a prisoner in his own palace, and dictated every measure, but the politic Constable acting on the ancient but infallible rule, to divide and reign, found means to induce

the Prince, who seems to have been as weak and infirm of purpose as his father, to abandon his party; and the latter called on all loyal subjects to join him in rescuing the King from the species of subjection in which he was held by his cousins, Enrique and Juan, King of Navarre. Don Juan having made his escape to his son's camp, the confederates were defeated in several actions, and the towns and fortresses they had taken recovered by the King, who seizing also their personal estates drove them to take refuge in Aragon.

Amid these hostilities, in the year 1445, the Queen sickened and died so suddenly as to create a suspicion of her death having been accelerated by the Constable, whose enemy she had long been. For this suspicion, however, no other foundation existed but the abruptness alike of her own death and that of her sister, Leonor, the widowed Queen of Portugal. Doña Maria complained of no other illness than a violent headache, and expired on the fourth day from that on which she was first attacked by the pain. The precise date of her decease is not recorded, though it was probably towards the latter end of February, as she died a few days after her sister Leonor, who expired on the 18th of that month, without any previous illness. That both were the victims of poison, was inferred from the body of each being covered, immediately after death, with livid and swollen spots; and the numerous foes of Don Alvaro were not backward in charging him with this crime, though no proof could be given of his having committed it, either directly or indirectly.

Rumours were rife as to the motives that could have induced the King to consent to his consort being thus sent to a premature grave, and it was by many asserted

that the light conduct of both the royal ladies had provoked the sovereign's anger, and that Don Alvaro was but the agent to execute the vengeance of a justly incensed husband. But even if the surmises concerning the conduct of the two Queens were correct, Juan II. was of too easy a nature and too utterly indifferent to his consort's deportment, to resent any infidelity; and to Don Alvaro it must certainly have been of no consequence. Whatever ill feeling might have existed between the Queen and the minister, had subsided some time previous to her death; and had his disposition been revengeful and cruel, he would have exercised his vengeance on others, who were far more obnoxious to him than the Queen and her sister.

Maria of Aragon died in Villacastin, within a few days after the battle of Olmedo, in which the King of Castile, who commanded his army in person, was victorious, and the King of Navarre and the Infante Don Enrique defeated, and the latter mortally wounded.

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## DOÑA ISABEL OF PORTUGAL.

### 1447.

REIGN OF JUAN II.

THE battle of Olmedo seemed to have consolidated the power of the King, and insured that of his minister, but that of the latter had reached its acme, and the very means which a mistaken policy suggested to him to secure his influence proved his ruin. What neither the prayers, remonstrances, nor open rebellions of Juan's consort, son,

royal cousin; and powerful barons had effected, was accomplished by the imprudence of Don Alvaro himself, who introduced into the royal palace, and seated on his master's throne, the fair cause of his own downfall and bloody death. Presuming on an intimacy of nearly the third of a century, on his thorough knowledge of his sovereign's foibles, his weak irresolute character, his incapacity for business, and his consequent dependence on his able favourite, the latter overstepped the limits of patience, and contradicted his easy tool on the subject that he had most at heart. After the death of his first Queen, Juan was desirous of selecting as his second, Radegouda,* daughter of Charles VII., King of France, who was famed for her beauty, and afterwards married Sigismund, Duke of Austria. Don Alvaro, however, who deemed it more to his interest that the future Queen of Castile should be indebted to him for the throne, without even consulting his master, had negotiated with Don Pedro, the Regent of Portugal, to obtain for the royal widower the hand of Isabel, daughter of the Infante Don Juan, and of Doña Isabel de Barcelos, and granddaughter of Don Juan, King of Portugal.

Within five months after the death of Maria, the Constable had solicited at the Court of Rome a dispensation for the marriage of Don Juan with her successor, and in November, of the same year, it was signed by Pope Eugenio IV. The King was ill disposed to consent to this arbitrary disposal of his hand, but he was too well drilled to obey his minister to make any decided opposition, however he might murmur in private. With his usual dexterity, the Constable represented the advantages

* Or Fridegonda.—Ed.

that would accrue from the alliance with Portugal, as in Juan's frequent contests with his disaffected nobles, he could rely on powerful aid from that country.

The debt, also, due by Castile for the assistance of troops during the last civil wars, would be cancelled, as it would be included in the dower of the bride. The arguments of Don Alvaro, joined to Juan's habit of yielding to him, prevailed, and he unwillingly consented to ratify the conditions made in his name, and empowered Don Garcia Sanchez de Valladolid as his proxy to sign the contract and marry the Infanta, all which was performed on the 9th of October, of that year, in the town of Ebora.

The King of Portugal gave the bride 45,000 florins (the amount of the debt of Castile), and 60,000 florins as her own patrimony. The King of Castile settled on her a jointure of 15,000 florins, the towns of Soria, and Ciudad Real and Madrigal. The nuptials were celebrated in August, of the year 1447, in the town of Madrigal.

Though the beauty of his young bride charmed the King, he could not forget that he had been treated like a child or an idiot, that his inclinations had been disregarded, and his will set aside by the Constable. Time and impunity had rendered the favourite careless of the arts with which he had formerly governed his sovereign; and the yoke which had before become galling to Juan, was rendered insupportably so by his late arbitrary proceedings. Still, surrounded as he was by the creatures of Don Alvaro, he dared not give vent to the angry feelings that rankled in his breast, and having vainly sought counsel from two confidants, he at length opened his heart to his young Queen, and besought her to advise him how to rid himself of his *quondam* friend. Isabel, who had

been greatly displeased by the uncalled-for interference between the King and herself, on several occasions, of Don Alvaro, and who was gifted with ready wit and an active spirit, bade the King repair to Valladolid, and leave the matter to her, and she would devise means to arrest the all-powerful favourite, who, though disliked, was greatly dreaded by his pusillanimous sovereign. Though the downfall of the Constable was then determined, the continual disturbances which daily took place throughout the kingdom long rendered its accomplishment impossible, and it was not until the beginning of the year 1453 that the plots of his enemy were realized.

In 1451, on the 22nd of April, the Queen gave birth, in Madrigal, to an Infanta, to whom was given her mother's name, and who was destined to be the first sovereign who wore the united diadems of Castile and Aragon. The King bestowed on his daughter the town of Cuellar as an appanage, and in his will left her a considerable sum in gold as a dower. This Princess could not be then sworn heiress, as the King had a male heir by his first Queen, but this ceremony was subsequently performed.

Two years afterwards the Queen gave birth to a Prince, who was named Alfonso, and to whom the King his father, would willingly have left his crown, had he not feared the great disturbances such a measure would have created. Juan could scarcely be expected to feel much affection for Prince Enrique, who had been the bane of his life, and whose repeated revolts were a source of continual torment to him. In the frequent quarrels between Juan and his unnatural heir, Don Alvaro continued to be umpire; and he was also the commandant of the royal troops in the hostilities that still existed between the King

and his cousin of Navarre. In every case of emergency, Don Alvaro was indispensable to his weak master, and though his conduct became daily more tyrannical, years elapsed before the King dared to shake off his authority, nor did he even then venture to act openly, but to the very last disguised his intentions. It is, moreover, probable that Juan would never have proceeded to extremities against his minister, had he not been sustained, and even urged on by the Queen, who, jealous of the superior influence of the favourite, decreed and accomplished his ruin and tragical death with the most vindictive and persevering cruelty.

Having obtained from the King the order for the arrest of the Constable, Isabel confided it to the Countess of Rivadeo, desiring her to hasten with it to her uncle, the Count of Plasencia, who was entrusted with the perilous charge of executing it. The Countess arrived in Bejar in the middle of the night of the 3rd of April, 1453, and immediately communicated her errand to the Count, who was one of the Constable's most inveterate foes. The old noble exulting in the prospect of his enemy's ruin, yet deprived by his age and infirmities from executing in person the welcome commission, entrusted it to his son, Don Alvaro Destuñiga, who set out with seven hundred lances for Burgos.

Marching by night only, and observing the greatest secrecy, young Destuñiga arrived in Burgos, into the fortress of which, having entered first himself, he managed to introduce his men. While on the way, he was met by a messenger from the King, bidding him return, for that his forces were insufficient for the purpose. "Return!" replied the bold youth, "never shall such shame be told of me. Tell his Majesty to rest in peace, for return I will

not from Burgos until I have taken the Constable, alive or dead."

The measures of his enemies could not be conducted with such secrecy, but that some rumours reached the Constable, who sending for the Bishop of Avila, whose sister was the wife of the Alcayde of the fortress, bade him go to the castle and ascertain if fresh troops had entered it. The Bishop obeyed, and inquired concerning the matter of his sister, who, either deceived by her husband, or being a party to the plot, replied affirmatively, but that they were merely a reinforcement of sixty men added to the garrison.

The Constable was satisfied with the reply, but rumours were rife in the town that he was to be seized on the following day, though none dared inform him of the unwelcome news. A faithful servant, however, Diego de Gotor, advised him of the reports that were circulated, and urged him to seek safety in flight.

The Constable, who was at supper when the news was brought him, at first seemed inclined to take this advice, but the thing appeared, after some reflection, so utterly impossible that he bade his faithful adviser "go, for naught would come of it." "God grant it may prove so," replied Diego, "but it grieves me much that you will not abide by my counsel." After the departure of Diego, Don Alvaro was persuaded to send a faithful page to the King, informing him that troops had entered the castle, and asking what he determined in this matter. The King, who was undressing before the fire at the time, appeared exceedingly confused when Chacon, the page, delivered his message, and it was some time ere he could return an answer, which he did at length, to the effect that on the following day he would talk over the business

with the Constable. Pedro de Lujan, gentleman of the chamber to the King, and a warm friend of Don Alvaro, accompanying the page to the door, bade him tell his master from him, that "he prayed to God they might all wake with their heads on the morrow morn." The Constable, on hearing this message, becoming rather alarmed, sent for a friend and asked his advice, but was by him dissuaded from mounting his horse and attempting to make his escape. The few adherents of the Constable now attempted to make head and oppose any attempt that might be made, but too much time had been suffered to elapse, and but forty men could be got together.

Don Alvaro himself, with a coolness that seems inexplicable, gave his attention for some time during the night to some lately arrived musicians who were singing in the streets, after which he retired to rest. The rashness and indifference with which Don Alvaro disregarded the signs of danger, the many warnings of his friends, and the suggestions of his own reason, would seem to warrant the belief that some irresistible power compelled him to await the fate which he felt he could not ultimately avoid. How otherwise can be understood this neglect of the most ordinary precautions in one who had sailed so long a pilot on those stormy seas, yet now, when the tempest lowered, forsook the helm and calmly awaited the storm that was to launch him into eternity? The day had scarcely dawned when the lances of Destuñiga, issuing from the fortress, approached the residence of the Constable. When within sight of the house, which they surrounded that no one should escape from it, they raised the cry of "*Castile, Castile, the King's freedom!*" The Constable, whom one of his servants had that instant told of the approach of the troops, came, partly dressed, to the window, and car-

ried away by his military enthusiasm, could not forbear exclaiming, "*Voto a Dios,* these be splendid fellows!" A shot that struck the edge of the casement warned him to retire. A desperate resistance was now begun by the inmates, headed by the brave Chacon; every missile of offence, such as stones, faggots, and arrows, being used to compel the assailants to retire. The chief object of this defence was to gain time, that the Constable's people, who were dispersed in the town, might collect, and thus rendering the chances more equal, enable them to continue the resistance, or obtain better conditions than they could otherwise expect. But, whether prevented by the King, who with many armed citizens was awaiting the result in the square, or from want of a chief to head and guide them, none ventured to approach. The besiegers had orders from the King to surround the house and prevent egress, but not to attack it, and as man after man dropped, the patience of the young commander was well nigh exhausted.

Chacon and Sisé, seeing that sooner or later they would be forced to surrender, besought their lord to take advantage of a postern gate still unwatched by the enemy, and take to flight, as he was the sole object of the attack, and no danger was dreaded by his servants. With great reluctance, the Constable at length consented to go, accompanied by one who knew every issue, and who was to guide him through narrow by-streets to the river-side. With little confidence in his guide, filled with misgivings as to the course he was pursuing, in thus leaving his devoted little band to their fate while he himself sought safety in an ignoble flight, his motions impeded by the cumbrous disguise he had assumed, the progress of Don Alvaro was slow, and he could with difficulty keep up with

his guide. Fatigued, disheartened, and desperate, the careworn noble called to his attendant, and declaring that he "would return and die nobly fighting with his followers, rather than escape through blind alleys and sewers like a base-born criminal," he turned about and made his way back through the still unwatched door. Having again assumed his armour, he mounted his horse, and placing himself at the head of his little troop in the court-yard once more, prepared to sell his life dearly.

Meanwhile, the King, seeing that it would be impossible to take the lion alive from his den, sent to summon him to surrender, with a promise that *justice should be done him*, signed and sealed by the King himself. The faithful adherents of Don Alvaro endeavoured to dissuade him from trusting to the faith of one in whom he knew no trust could be placed, and whose weak and fickle nature rendered him the tool of others. "Better far, my lord," urged the resolute Chacon, "that we all die like good men, and true in your defence, and you, Sir, with us, leaving the memory of this brave fight, than submit to dishonour and a death of shame. Heed not, Sir, these safe-conducts, worded to allow of double meaning, and trust that he who delivered you from the lances of your enemies in Medina del Campo and Olmedo, will save you from the peril of this day." These brave words were, however, powerless to persuade the now disheartened noble, within whose breast also the deeply rooted spirit of loyalty pleaded against resistance to his sovereign. "God forefend," replied the veteran, "that at my age, on the brink of the grave, after forty years of honour and power, I should leave to my sons the stain of having fought against the standard of my sovereign. It shall be with me as God and the King will it; and in the King's hands shall I

place myself." The messengers having returned with his answer to the King, Don Alvaro employed the little time left him in arranging his affairs.

Having ordered his chests to be brought to him, he distributed part of the treasures contained in them among his followers, leaving the remainder to the King's disposal, burned part of his papers, and bestowed the commandery of Usagre, then vacant, on one of his pages, thus making use for the last time of his authority as Grand Master of Santiago. This done, he asked for a hammer, and with his own hands broke and defaced his seals, that they might not be put to evil uses by his foes. He also named the two pages who were to remain in attendance on his person, and charged Chacon with the care of conducting the remainder of his household to his wife and son, entreating that they would continue their faithful service to his family. He then clothed himself in the habit of hi order, and mounting his horse, awaited the return of those to whom he was to surrender. At the noble and affectionate farewell which he addressed to his followers, they were melted to tears, and with cries and lamentations vainly sought to oppose his departure. "Whither go ye thus without us, Sir? With you will we also go, Sir; with you will we live or die. Leave us not thus, my lord!" With kind words, Don Alvaro endeavoured to soothe and inspire them with hopes which he was far from feeling, until the arrival of the envoys from the King put an end to this heartrending scene.

To enumerate the many insults and mortifications with which his vindictive enemies vainly sought to vex and break the undaunted spirit of the noble Constable, would fill more pages than the limits of this work allow. Twelve lawyers and several barons were assembled to try him, or,

in other words, to condemn him to death and to confiscate his property. In this mock trial, the most absurd charges were made against him, and the spirit and letter of the law equally disregarded. When sentence had been pronounced on him, he was removed to Valladolid. None of the attendants being willing to inform him of his impending fate, it was contrived that on the way two friars of a neighbouring convent, one of whom was a celebrated preacher known to Don Alvaro, should join the escort as if by accident. Entering into conversation with the prisoner, the monks introduced the subject of the vicissitudes of fortune, and the folly of attaching any value to a life of so unstable a tenure. Don Alvaro, perceiving the drift of their morality, coolly inquired if they came to warn him to prepare for death. "While life endures, we all are journeying towards death," replied the friar, "but he that is a prisoner is nighest the bourne; and you, my lord, are sentenced already." "While a man remains in ignorance of his fate, he may fear it" returned the Grand Master calmly; "but when once its term is fixed, death can have no terrors for a Christian, and ready am I to die if such be the King's will." With the same firmness, Don Alvaro went through all the preparations for his execution, making his will and settling his affairs.

The King was far from possessing the tranquillity of mind of his victim. During the night preceding the execution of the companion of his youth, the friend of his manhood, the supporter of his throne, he was greatly agitated, and memory brought vividly before him the services of long years, and the tried affection of the doomed man. Once or twice he called a page, and bade him deliver a sealed paper to Destuñiga, doubtless an order to delay the execution, and as often recalled him, and took

it from him. The Queen being informed of his perturbation, hastened to his apartment, and remaining with him, succeeded in preventing him from giving way to his remorseful scruples. With the cunning inspired by hatred, she artfully recalled every petty occasion on which the great mind of the Constable had controlled and subdued the weak and imbecile faculties of his master; every insignificant contradiction, and every instance of careless breach of etiquette, were clothed in the darkest colours; and the years of past thraldom and future liberty descanted on with eloquent pertinacity till the King was wearied and silenced, if not convinced, and resigned himself to allow of that which neither his heart nor his reason approved.

At dawn of day, on the 2nd of June, 1453, having attended mass, and devoutly received the sacrament, the Grand Master prepared himself for the scaffold. Having asked for some refreshment, a dish of cherries was brought to him, of which he ate, and afterwards drank a cup of wine. He then mounted a mule, and attended by two monks and the officers of justice, he was paraded through the streets, preceded by a herald vociferating, "This is the justice which our lord the King has decreed to this cruel tyrant and usurper of the royal crown; and to punish these his crimes is he ordered to be beheaded." "I accept this humiliation as a penance for my sins," said the prisoner.

When near the scaffold, perceiving in the crowd a page of the Prince, he called to him: "Page," said he, "tell my lord the Prince, to give his servants a better guerdon than that which my sovereign has bestowed on me." Having walked around the platform twice, as though he would have spoken to the crowd below, he drew his seal

ring from his finger, and giving it, together with his hat, to Morales, one of the pages who had waited on him, bade him keep them as the last gift he would receive from him. The page, on this, burst into tears, in which he was immediately joined by all the spectators of this sad scene. The very populace that had been clamorous for the death of the proud and powerful lord, now struck with admiration at the quiet dignity with which he submitted to his fate, deeply compassionating his sufferings.

The holy men exhorting him to give all his thoughts to dying like a Christian, "I do, indeed," said Don Alvaro; "rest assured I die in the faith of the martyrs." The executioner then produced a cord: "What wouldst thou do with that?" inquired Don Alvaro. "Bind your hands, my lord." "Nay, use not that for the purpose," returned the noble, drawing from his breast a silken one he had provided, "bind them with this, and see that thy dagger is well sharpened, that thou mayest despatch me quickly. Tell me," he added, "wherefore is yon hook in the post?" The executioner replying that it was intended to place his head on it after it was severed. "Do as ye will with it," he returned, "when I am no more; both it and my body are but clay." These were his last words. Laying his head on the block, after baring his neck with his own hands, the executioner gave him the kiss of peace, then, according to the barbarous manner of that day, plunged the knife into his throat, severed the head from the body and placed it on the spike, where it remained nine days, The remains of Don Alvaro were at first privately buried, but years after his death they were removed, and pompously interred by his faithful follower, the gallant Chacon, in the magnificent sepulchre he had caused to be erected in the days of his prosperity.

Thus perished the high and mighty lord, Don Alvaro de Luna, High Constable of Castile, Grand Master of Santiago, Conde of Santiesteban, and lord of innumerable towns, castles and fortresses, a victim to the faithlessness of his King, to the ingratitude of the Queen he had raised to the throne, and to the jealousy and envy of the courtiers whom his superiority in all things had mortified and cast into the shade. Much has been said of the unmeasured ambition of Don Alvaro, but his ambition to govern was fully equalled by his ability to do so, and he well deserved the favour shown him by the sovereign, to whose very life he was indispensable, as the sequel will show. Of the numbers whom he had enriched and honoured, but few ventured to raise their voices in his defence. It may appear to the reader that more than the just proportions have been allowed to the sketch of the last days of the life of the Constable, but they present so vivid a picture of the times, bringing before us not only the events, but the manners, habits, and principles of the men who then flourished, that I have thought it might not prove uninteresting.*

* The sketch here given of the rise and fall of this able Constable, Don Alvaro, by the author of this work, however perfect it may appear as a picture, is unfortunately open to much objection. It is true that he became necessary to the weak monarch, but it is no less certain that this effect was produced by the art with which he increased, instead of endeavouring to remove, the helplessness of his master; while, as regarded the Queen, he had not merely overstepped the modesty of a subject in negotiating her marriage upon his own unsupported authority, but had selected her in preference to the Princess desired by Juan himself, with the sole view of securing a facile tool, through whose influence he might work out his own projects. Juan II. of Spain, in the hands of Alvaro, instinctively reminds the historical reader of Louis XIII. of France in those of Richelieu, although the genius of the two men will not admit of a comparison; and in each case the wily minister was fated to find his

From the period of his minister's death, the health of the King rapidly declined; and finding his end approaching, he removed to Valladolid, where the Queen was then residing, and died on the 22nd of July, 1454.

The grief of the Queen at the loss of her husband was so excessive as to impair her reason; and from that time to her death, which took place on the 15th August, 1496, she never wholly recovered the use of her mental faculties. During this long widowhood of forty-two years, she continued to reside in retirement in her own town of Arevalo. The King, her step-son, treated her ever with great respect, allowing her a body-guard of two hundred men; and her own children, Isabel and Alfonso, resided with her until after the birth of the daughter of King Enrique, at which time they were sent for by him, to reside at Court. Her daughter, afterwards Queen of Castile, frequently visited her in Arevalo, ministering to her wants with her own hands.

most dangerous antagonist in a woman. Haughty, ambitious, and overbearing, Alvaro could brook no rival in his prosperity, and thus drew down upon his devoted head the enmity of those who, before he had built his fortunes upon the imbecility of his sovereign, had been more powerful than himself.[a] The career of Alvaro offers a great and salutary moral lesson; but we are far from questioning, after the fashion of the author, the justice of his fate. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam.*—Ed.

[a] The atrocious assassination of Don Alfonso de Vivaro, the King's Treasurer and the favourite of the Queen, who had avowed his jealousy and apprehension, and whom he invited to a banquet at his house, and caused to be hurled from the roof of a tower, is of itself sufficient to deaden and extinguish all wholesome sympathy in his ruin.

# DOÑA JUANA DE PORTUGAL.

## 1455.

REIGN OF ENRIQUE IV. (THE IMPOTENT).

If the reign of Juan II. were distracted by fierce civil feuds, no less so was that of his equally weak, but less refined son. Juan neglected the administration of public affairs to indulge his taste for the elegant pursuits of the scholar, the poet, and the musician; while his son, when scarcely out of his childhood, had rendered himself equally unfit to govern by his indulgence in the gross pleasures of the voluptuary. At the age of fifteen, worn out by debauchery, his physical faculties prostrated by early excess, and weakened in mind as well as body, he became the tool of parasites, a rebellious subject, and an unnatural son. The only qualities which his most partial adherents and chroniclers could find to praise in him, were his liberality and his mildness of temper; but the one degenerated into a prodigality that exhausted his treasury and left him penniless, and the other into a weakness fatal to himself and his people.

His marriage in 1440 with the amiable Princess of Navarre, celebrated with a magnificence unprecedented in Castile,* was, at his own solicitation, annulled, thirteen years afterwards, on grounds the most humiliating and absurd.† After the iniquitous sentence by which the

* *See* Annals of the preceding reign.

† "Déjose que mediaron hechizos, &c., &c., &c."—*Florez, Reynas Catolicas, vol.* II., *p.* 137.

Prince sought to conceal the deplorable effects of his profligacy had been pronounced by the Bishop of Segovia,* and confirmed by the supreme Pontiff, taking from her the jointure settled on her, and reducing her to a poverty that was but the precursor of worse evils, Blanche returned to Navarre. Left heiress of that kingdom in 1461, by the death of her unfortunate brother, Charles, Prince of Viana, and destitute of power to enforce her claim against her ambitious father and sister, the inheritance proved her ruin, occasioning first, the loss of her liberty, and, two yeas after, the loss of her life, in 1464.†

At the accession, in 1454, of Prince Enrique to the throne, the people, heartily tired of the late long struggle of the proud and powerful aristocracy against the crown, and of their incessant fluctuations between suffering from the encroachments of the royal prerogative, and from the unrestrained licence of the insolent nobles, ventured to indulge in cheering anticipations of better days under the new sovereign. His open-handed generosity contrasted well with the avarice of Juan during his last years; and his vices were excused as the foibles of anuncontrolled and ardent youth, whom age would sober down. His affability, which led him to a familiar intercourse with the middling and even lower ranks, while it endeared him to the bulk of the people, soon rendered him an object of contempt to the higher classes; and, at the same time, his want of spirit and pesevérance to carry out his plans, caused him to be despised by his foreign foes.

In the first year of his reign, Enrique published a crusade against the Moors, and his call was enthusiastically

* "Declaró ser nulo el matrimonio por impotencia respectiva."—*Florez.*

† *Vide* Annals of Queens of Aragon, Juana Enrique.

responded to. Had the brilliant preparations which he made against the King of Granada been followed by decisive and vigorous measures, he would have won golden opinions from a nation with whom wars against the Infidels were ever popular. But, with neither judgment to devise or direct military operations, nor courage to carry out the plans of others, the costly expedition was productive of no satisfactory result. The war proved destructive to the inhabitants of the frontiers, both Moors and Castilians, who beheld their harvests destroyed and their homesteads burnt to the ground, without compensating advantages to either side.

The haughty Castilian barons, disdaining to obey a monarch who could neither win their admiration nor compel their submission, soon renewed the tumultuous scenes that had disgraced the preceding reign; and, as cowardice ever provokes aggression, the spirit of insubordination which he was powerless to quell, though it failed in its efforts to wrest the crown from his brow, harassed him during the whole course of his life.

Irritated by the tame policy that led the King to content himself with border forays, and to withdraw his forces whenever an engagement offered, wasting his time in ravaging the enemy's frontiers, under the pretence "that he prized the life of one of his subjects beyond those of a thousand Mussulmen," several of his brave and impatient barons even formed a conspiracy to detain the person of the sovereign forcibly, and to compel him to carry on the war with energy. But the project was disclosed too soon to be feasible.

In 1455, the King announced to his council his intention of soliciting the hand of the Princess Juana, the posthumous daughter of Edward, King of Portugal, and

sister of the reigning sovereign, Alfonso V. The council approving the King's choice, Don Ferran Lopez de Lorden, treasurer of the church of Segovia, chaplain of the King, and member of his council, was dispatched to Portugal, with full powers; and so diligently did he fulfil his instructions, that on the 22nd January of the same year he solemnly espoused the Princess in his master's name. The King ratified the marriage contract on the 25th of February, in Segovia.

So eager was Enrique to obtain his bride that he consented to receive her without a dower, obliging himself to provide in a suitable manner for the maintenance and establishment in life, according to their rank, of twelve Portuguese ladies, whom, together with a dueña, a lady of the bed-chamber, and a number of domestics of inferior rank, the Princess was to bring with her. The towns of Ciudad Real and Olmedo were assigned as her jointure, together with 20,000 golden florins.

The bride was to arrive on the frontiers within eighty-one days from that of the signing of the contract; and, having accordingly set out, accompanied by the Count and Countess of Alonguia, she was met in Badajoz by Don Juan de Guzman, Duke of Medina Sidonia, uncle of the King, with a numerous and brilliant suite, under whose escort she proceeded to Cordova, where the King awaited her. The progress of the Princess was marked by the gay and splendid pageants with which she was greeted by every town on her way. When within a short distance of the town, Enrique, at the head of a number of nobles, sallied forth to receive her, and the nuptial rites were solemnized on the 21st of May, by the Archbishop of Seville, assisted by the Archbishop of Tours, Ambassador from the Court of France. The Court then removed to Seville, where the

nuptial festivities were continued with great magnificence, and the usual entertainments of bull-fights, and the game of reeds and tilting. A great tournament, in which one hundred knights engaged, fifty against fifty, was held by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and Don Juan Pacheco, Marquis of Villena. Having spent a few days in Seville, the King and Queen set out on a progress through the kingdom.

The state maintained by Enrique exceeded that of any of his predecessors, his body-guard consisting of three thousand six hundred lances, well equipped, and commanded by officers of high rank. The Court was followed by many nobles and gentlemen, receiving pay and maintenance from the King, though exercising no functions. The royal treasurer, Diego Arrias, ventured one day to remonstrate on the extravagance of maintaining so many attendants at the expense of the royal coffers, and suggested that those alone who were in actual service, should be paid. "You speak as becomes Diego Arrias," returned Enrique, "but, it behoves me to act as a King; the treasures of kings should not be hoarded, but liberally dispensed for the happiness of their subjects; we must remunerate the services of those we employ, and give gratuitously to those whom we do not, that they may not seek their subsistence by means that would bring them to shame; and, that this may be done without oppressing my subjects by the imposition of fresh imposts, I give my own rents and treasures."

The King was, notwithstanding this pomp in his household, personally averse to ceremony, and would never allow his hand to be kissed; but the homage he was ever anxious to avoid receiving in his own person, he was most desirous should be paid to his bride; and during the royal

progress, Juana was everywhere greeted with the pompous reception of the entrance in state, under the royal canopy, usual on such occasions, while Enrique entered privately.

The Court having in 1459 returned to Madrid, the facilities for the chase afforded by its adjoining forests making that town the favourite residence of Enrique, a series of splendid entertainments were given by the great vassals of the crown. At the conclusion of one of these, given by the Archbishop of Seville, Don Alonzo de Fonseca, two vases filled with gold rings set with precious stones were placed on the table, that the Queen and her ladies might each select therefrom as their tastes dictated.

Amid the lovely Castilian dames by whom she was surrounded, and who contributed not a little to render the Court of Enrique as gay and attractive as it was splendid, his consort bore away the palm of beauty. Juana, young, lively and thoughtless, by the brilliancy of her wit and the grace of her manners, which had made her the delight and admiration of the Court of Portugal, fascinated the young Castilian nobles, though her sprightliness was rather incompatible with the grave formalities of the elder. One or two events, however, amid the perpetual round of pleasure in which Enrique sought to forget his duties, occurred to mar the domestic happiness of the royal pair, and also to sow the seeds of the foul suspicion that staining indelibly the Queen's honour, subsequently disinherited her offspring.

Among the ladies who had accompanied Juana from Portugal was Doña Guiomar de Castro, whose rare beauty distinguished her amid the bevy of fair ones surrounding their lovely mistress; and to this lady the King, greatly to the surprise of all, paid attentions so unequivocal in their expression as finally to arouse the jealousy of the

Queen, who, quick-tempered and unaccustomed to self-control, took the earliest opportunity of manifesting her resentment in a manner little beseeming a lady and a sovereign, certainly, but to which she was provoked by the insolence of the favourite. The King having proclaimed a bull-fight, in honour, probably, of the new object of his capricious fancy, the Queen peremptorily prohibited all her ladies from attending it, and bade them remain in the inner apartments.

Doña Guiomar, presuming on her intimacy with the King, disregarded her mistress' injunctions, and, in splendid attire, witnessed the games from a balcony of the royal palace, overlooking the square where they were performed. Greatly incensed at this contempt of her authority, the Queen, forgetting all self-respect, awaited at the foot of the staircase her rival's descent, and seizing her by the hair saluted her ears with cuffs as sound as were ever bestowed by regal and feminine hands. Enrique in person came to the rescue of the prostrate dame; and highly resenting this summary administration of justice, forced the Queen to relinquish her grasp, and flung her from him. From rage, jealousy and mortification, Juana fainted. Thinking it well to prevent the repetition of such scenes, Enrique removed the lady from Court, and established her in a village within two leagues of Madrid, where she maintained a state scarcely less than regal. This intrigue, thus acquiring scandalous notoriety, produced the usual effects of dividing the courtiers into factions, no less a personage than the Archbishop of Seville, forgetful of all decency, openly advocating the cause of the favourite, while the Marquis of Villena adhered to the Queen.

Nor was this the only instance of apparent infidelity in

the King. Doña Catalina de Sandoval was also for some time the object of his preference; but, endowed with neither constancy nor prudence, she was convicted of bestowing her favours on another lover, and the enraged King was in this case guilty of the only act of cruelty ever perpetrated by his orders. His rival expiated his presumption with the loss of his head. His vengeance went no farther, for though Doña Catalina was sent to the convent of San Pedro de Las Dueñas, in Toledo, it might have been considered rather a reward than a punishment, the Abbess, a lady of high rank and spotless fame being expelled, and her post bestowed on the King's paramour, under pretence that "*the strict laws of the order had fallen into desuetude, and must be restored!*"

The conduct of Enrique, however, could scarcely be adduced to palliate the levity of the Queen's, her partiality for one of the King's favourites becoming so evident as to give rise to the grossest imputations. Enrique himself being generally supposed not only to be cognizant of, but the promoter and encourager of the intrigue. His reasons for pursuing a line of conduct as novel as it was degrading, may be better conjectured than explained; but the suspicions that had been entertained at the period of his first marriage, now acquired greater strength than ever.

Don Beltran de la Cueva, the supposed recipient of the Queen's favours, had newly risen in the King's grace.* Endowed with uncommon personal beauty, enhanced by polished manners, and all the accomplishments indispensable to the knight aiming at success with the fair, he ascended with incredible rapidity to the possession of high honours, great wealth, and unlimited influence over

* Beltran de la Cueva was one of the King's personal domestics.—Ed.

both King and Queen. Of his gallantry and prowess an instance is related on the occasion of the entertainments given in honour of the Ambassador of the Duke of Brittany. The *fêtes*, which lasted four days, were exceedingly brilliant, and commenced with a sumptuous banquet in a hunting lodge belonging to the King, within two leagues of Madrid, and surrounded with dense woods, stocked with game. The buffets were garnished with gold and silver plate to the amount of 20,000 marks.

This gorgeous display proving too strong a temptation for the honesty of two squires, under the pretence of obeying some order of the master of the revels, and in the guise of serving-men, they approached a side-board, and stole several of its valuable ornaments, the King himself being an unobserved and silent witness of their movements. When subsequently informed of the loss, he coolly replied, "Those who committed the theft were probably in want, and, as it was better that they should steal from me than from any one else, ye need not seek to recover the booty, for I freely allow them to keep it." This kindness, or rather weakness, constantly put in practice by Enrique, occasioned nearly all his misfortunes.

On this day also, was held a tournament, in which twenty cavaliers engaged. On the second day there was a race, followed by the game of reeds, in which one hundred nobles, magnificently attired, took part. The third day was taken up by a great hunt, on foot and on horseback. The amusement provided on the fourth and last day by Don Beltran de la Cueva, then majordomo of the King's household, eclipsed, in point of novelty, if not also in splendour, those by which it had been preceded, and consisted in a passage of arms held by that noble in the following manner:

In the road through which the royal *cortège* was to return to Madrid, an enclosure was constructed with gates at either side, at the entrance of which were stationed certain guards disguised as savages, who, as the nobles approached, each leading a lady's palfrey, forbade their passing until each had run six courses with the knight challenger, or left his right-hand glove as a forfeit. A carved arch, with a number of golden letters, was near the lists, and each knight who shivered three lances was allowed to take therefrom the initials of his lady's name. Overlooking the lists were three platforms, richly decorated; one for the King, the Queen, her ladies, and the Ambassador; the second for the grandees, and the third for the judges; and on each sumptuous collations were served to the occupants. Though he concealed the name of the lady in whose honour he contended, so gallantly did Don Beltran bear himself, that the King, charmed with his prowess, commemorated the day by the erection, on the spot where his feats had been achieved, of a chapel dedicated to St. Jerome!

Thus did continual *fêtes* keep the mind of the weak monarch occupied, veiling with garlands the abyss to which his folly was conducting him. The example of a dissolute Court was not likely to be lost on the middling and lower ranks, who, while they criticized and condemned, were too prone to imitate, as far, and even beyond what their means would allow, the licentiousness and extravagance of their rulers first ruining themselves, and then seeking to retrieve their fortunes by enlisting under the banners of the robber-chieftains, so numerous in that age.

Many of the barons fortifying themselves in their castles, and setting at nought the King's authority and

the laws, led the lives of freebooters, occasionally sallying forth to plunder travellers, or to attack some village that refused to acknowledge their rule. One of these noble land-pirates, Don Alonzo Fajardo, who, during the troubles of the preceding reign, had contrived to increase his power on the frontiers of Murcia, by the addition of the towns of Cartagena and Lorca, with fortresses pertaining to the crown, to the Marquisate of Villena, and to the Grand Mastership of Santiago, actually carried on a traffic with the Moors, to whom he sold the Christian prisoners of both sexes and all ages whom he captured in his expeditions. The King, roused at length from his apathy, sent a force of six hundred horse against him; and, after a stout resistance, he was compelled to surrender, his estates were confiscated, and he himself was barely allowed to retain a life he had forfeited by unparalleled crimes.

Nor were the spiritual lords free from the contagion of the canker of vice that spread through every class. Don Rodrigo de Luna, Archbishop of Santiago, having endeavoured to carry off a young bride from the very midst of the nuptial festivities, was driven from his see, and forced to end his days in a miserable exile; not indeed by the proper enforcement of the outraged laws, or by the authority of the sovereign, but by an indignant populace, headed by Don Luis de Osorio, son of the Count of Trastamara.

But the people, while they slavishly imitated the vices that caused their misery and oppression, had still too much of their ancient spirit left not to murmur impatiently against the yoke whose weight daily increased; and the symptoms of the coming earthquake were neither few nor light. The King, entirely given up to sloth and

pleasure, abandoned the administration to his ministers, Don Juan Pacheco and the Archbishop of Seville, the expression of his will, when he uttered it, being merely that of his minions; and the arbitrary and unconstitutional measures which had caused so much displeasure during the foregoing reign were now renewed with even less attempt at disguise; while the law, distorted by the arbitrary will of its ministers, was converted into a tool to enact every species of injustice with impunity.

One of the first and most flagrant acts of injustice that contributed to alienate the nobles from the King, was his treatment of the Count Don Juan de Luna, nephew of the great Constable. This noble, one of the most powerful in Castile, was the guardian since the death of her father, of the granddaughter of the Constable, and heiress of the condado of Santiesteban. Instigated by his chief favourite, Don Juan Pacheco, Marquis of Villena, who, anxious that his son should marry the heiress and enter into possession of her vast domains, persuaded his sovereign that Don Juan de Luna was disaffected, and by his position could, if so disposed, do great harm, Enrique determined to arrest and imprison the Conde.

With the cunning of weak minds, he masked his evil designs under the guise of friendship; and repaired to Ayllon, the residence of the unsuspecting noble, under pretence of honouring him with a visit. He was received by the host with splendid hospitality, which he repaid by the treacherous seizure of his entertainer, when the latter, having accompanied his sovereign beyond his own gates, was taking a courteous leave. The King ordered his prisoner, under the penalty of being instantly beheaded if he refused to comply, to give up all his fortresses, together with the young Countess and her

domains. Yielding to necessity, the Count complied, and the King immediately entered into possession, placing Alcaldes of his own in the several castles.

The estates of the Countess, by her subsequent marriage with the son of Don Juan Pacheco, contributed to the increase of the already formidable power of the house of Villena; and thus were the weakness and injustice of the King preparing his own ruin by the concentration of so much strength in one man.

Though the reign of Enrique is one of the most inglorious in the history of Spain, considering the means he possessed and the causes that might have excited him to war, some brilliant feats of personal valour still shine forth amid the dark eclipse that veiled the sun of Castile.

In 1462, the Moors of the kingdom of Granada, either tired of the long inaction of a peace that had lasted three years, or despising the pusillanimous administration of Enrique, under the conduct of Muley Bulhacern one of the King's sons, and to the number of two thousand five hundred horse and ten thousand foot, invaded and ravaged the town and territory of Estepa, making a number of prisoners, and taking a large booty, consisting chiefly in cattle. The news of this inroad reaching Don Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, eldest son of the Count of Arcos, the gallant youth vowed to intercept their retreat, and to retrieve the honour of Castile. Having assembled a hundred of his own mounted retainers, he set out for Estepa, and was joined on the way by the Alcalde of Osuna, Don Luis de Pernia, with one hundred men. As they passed through the villages, on their way, these two valiant cavaliers called on the inhabitants to join them against the common foe; and the little band had swelled to two hundred and sixty horse and six hundred foot, when they

came in sight of the vanguard of the Moors, near Peña-rubia.

On the approach of the Christians, the Moors sent to encounter them a detachment of two thousand three hundred horse, all picked troops, the remainder continuing the retreat with their plunder. At sight of the immense numerical superiority of their enemies, dismay pervaded the little band of Castilians; but the undaunted leaders cheering them with brave words and no less brave example, infused new spirit into their hearts, and with the banner of Don Rodrigo unfurled and trumpets sounding, they advanced intrepidly to what seemed certain death.

For some time the battle raged without any apparent advantage on either side, but the reckless valour of the Christians, who fought with the courage of despair for their homes, their property, their faith, and life itself, finally gained the field; and the Moors, who had from the first been surprised and shaken by the furious onset of the Christians, at length gave way, and fled precipitately on all sides. The panic of the fugitives communicating itself to the party that had gone on before, they doubtless thought an army was in pursuit of them, and abandoning their charge, made a prompt retreat. Don Rodrigo having assembled his men, found his loss to amount to thirty of the cavalry and one hundred and fifty of the infantry slain, while that of the Moors was one thousand four hundred left dead on the field.

On the following morning a cloud of dust at a short distance induced at first the belief that the Moors were returning, but it proved to be the flocks and herds, which, with the instinct of their nature, were returning to seek their wonted pasturage. The banners of the Moorish Prince and rich spoils were collected by the

victors, and this signal achievement was celebrated with great rejoicings and solemn processions in Madrid and other towns.

In the spring of this year, Juana, whose levity had become notorious, and who was now in the eighth year of her marriage, gave unequivocal hopes of soon becoming a mother, to the unbounded delight of the King, whose anxious wish for issue had been gratified by none of his mistresses, and who now, in token of his satisfaction at the prospect, immediately bestowed on his consort the town of Aranda, where she was then residing. Enrique, being desirous that the Queen's confinement should take place in Madrid, she was placed in a litter, and removed thither with all the care which her situation required; and in six months afterwards she gave birth to a Princess named Juana after her mother, but subsequently designated as La Excelentisima Señora, and by the populace, by the less honourable but significant appellation of La Beltraneja, in allusion to her reputed father, Don Beltran de la Cueva. The ceremony of the baptism took place eight days after the birth, with great pomp, in the palace chapel, the Archbishop of Toledo officiating, assisted by the Bishops of Calahorra, Cartagena, and Osma. The sponsors were the Count of Armagnac, the French Ambassador, the Marquis of Villena, the King's young sister, the Infanta Isabel, and the Marchioness of Villena. The Count de Alva de Lista had the honour of holding the royal babe during the ceremony.

The event was celebrated with great rejoicings throughout the kingdom; and the Cortes were convened two months subsequently, to tender the customary oaths of allegiance to the Princess as heiress apparent to the crown, on which occasion the Archbishop of Toledo held her

in his arms. The Infantes Isabel and Alfonso were the first to take the oath and kiss the hand of her whom they now acknowledged as their future sovereign, but from whom each in turn was to take the crown; and their example was unhesitatingly followed by all the clergy, nobility, and deputies; nor did one dissenting voice oppose this act of homage, though so many of those then present, subsequently affirmed that they had, at the time privately protested against it.

Within a year after the birth of this daughter, an incident as singular as it is incredible, is gravely related by all the chroniclers of that reign. As Juana, then far advanced in her second pregnancy, was sitting at the window of her apartment in Aranda, she was thrown into considerable alarm by the sudden ignition of her hair by the rays of the sun. Prompt assistance was rendered by her ladies, ere any material damage to the Queen's person had resulted from this extraordinary conflagration, but the fright occasioned the premature delivery of a still-born male infant.

Soon after the birth of the Princess, the King had bestowed on his favourite, Don Beltran de la Cueva, the title of Count of Ledesma, and he also procured for him the hand of the youngest daughter of the Marquis of Santillana. The nuptials were celebrated with great magnificence, and graced by the presence of the royal family. Such high honours, conferred on a man raised from nothing over the heads of the ancient nobles, greatly increased the discontent of the latter, and hastened the outbreak of a warfare the most strange, unprincipled and unrelenting, yet excusable, if not justifiable, if we take into consideration the turpitude of a corrupted Court and its imbecile head. Among those who felt themselves espe-

cially aggrieved by the King's partiality for the favourite, were the Marquis of Villena and his uncle, the Archbishop of Toledo; and their rage knew no bounds when Don Beltran was openly called to share with them the administration. The important part enacted by these two ministers in all the transactions which occurred during this reign, entitle them to some notice here.

Pacheco, of noble Portuguese parentage, had been a page in the household of Don Alvaro de Luna, who procured him a similar post in that of Prince Enrique. Though greatly inferior in many respects to his first great master, Pacheco possessed a smooth insinuating manner, and a certain tact in political intrigue that soon won the favour of his new patron, who found him an agreeable, a useful, and soon an indispensable companion. Crafty, ambitious, and restless, he followed to the letter the Machiavellian maxim of *diviser pour regner*, and took care to keep his lord continually embroiled in discussions with his father. Now siding with the enemies of the sovereign, now with the sovereign himself, civil war was his element. Created Marquis of Villena by Don Juan II., his extensive domains rendered him second in power to the King alone.

Don Alfonso Carillo, the Archbishop, was one of those warrior prelates so frequently met with in that and the preceding ages, who felt far more at ease in the martial array of the knight than in the peaceful robes of the churchman. Ambitious and proud, as eager to advance the interests of his friends as to foil the schemes of his adversaries, unyielding and persevering, his firmness contributed no less than his power to win him success in his undertakings. Little could these two haughty nobles, the most violent spirits of those turbulent times, accustomed

as they were to rule with despotic sway the sovereign and the nation, brook the interference of a third partner to share the administration.

In 1464, Enrique, who had taken part with the Prince of Viana against his father, Juan II. of Aragon, and assisted the Catalans in their rebellion, with men and money, on the death of the Prince was offered by them the sovereignty of that province. But, following the advice of his false minister, the King, whom not even the pathetic appeal of his cousin and former wife, the hapless Blanche,* could arouse to any act of decision, abandoned the Catalans and made peace with Aragon, thus neglecting a legitimate and favourable opportunity of extending his dominions.

The diplomatic talents of the politic Juana Enriquez, Queen of Aragon, contribute no little to matters being settled so advantageously for her husband. On the arrival of the Marquis of Villena, in Saragossa, as Ambassador of Castile, he found the King had left for Catalonia, and deputed the Queen to entertain him during an absence that was to be of short duration. Juana having received the Marquis with the grace and affability for which she was noted, invited him to dine *tête-à-tête* with her on the

* This ill-fated Princess, when on her forced journey to the castle of Ortes, in Bearne, whither her implacable and remorseless foes were hurrying her, feeling that she was on the way to captivity and death, found means to write to Enrique, from St. Jean Pie du Port, a letter couched in terms that might have softened the hardest heart and infused courage into the most pusillanimous; but, being addressed to one little better than an idiot, it failed to have any effect. Recalling the days of peaceful happiness she had spent under his protection, she invoked his assistance, and made over to him her claims on Navarre, to the exclusion of the Count and Countess of Foix, of whose murderous intentions she had but too true a foreboding.

following day, when the noble found himself entertained by his royal hostess, and waited on by none but *ladies*, and those of the highest distinction. Each day was marked by some new attention to him, until the arrival of the King allowed of the settlement of the business that had brought him there; and the Marquis, intoxicated with the flattery so delicately administered, and disgusted with the partiality of Enrique for Don Beltran, was easily won to sacrifice his sovereign's interests to the crafty Juan of Aragon.

Enrique, though he had made no inconsiderable conquests in Catalonia, was induced to refer the arbitration of the difference between himself and Juan to the King of France, and the latter sent an Ambassador to arrange the preliminaries of an interview. At a ball given on the occasion of his reception, the envoy Juan de Rohan, Lord of Montaloan, and Admiral of France, was honoured with the hand of the Queen as his partner in the dance; a favour the gallant Frenchman appreciated so highly that he made a solemn vow never to dance with another woman.

The conference between the Kings of France and Castile took place near Bayonne, on the banks of the Bidassoa, that river dividing their several dominions. A strange contrast was exhibited between the two sovereigns, not only in their own persons, but also in those of their followers, and everything pertaining to them. The avaricious and crafty Louis XI., dressed in the mean, coarse attire that formed his usual clothing, was followed by a suite, who, imitating with courtier-like servility, their sovereign, adopted a similar style of costume, while Enrique IV., apparelled in the rich and becoming Spanish garb of that day, was attended by his Moorish guard,

splendidly equipped, and by a train of nobles whose dress and equipage were of the most gorgeous and costly description. The favourite of the Castilian monarch distinguished himself by the splendour of his jewel-studded dress, his very boots being embroidered with pearls and his barge decked with cloth of gold, and sails of brocade.

The two sovereigns having doffed their bonnets, embraced with much apparent cordiality, neither sitting down during the interview; a fine, large-sized greyhound stood between them, on which both kept their hands. Louis, in in his quality of mediator, pronounced that Enrique should renounce Catalonia, give up the territory he had conquered, and receive, as a remuneration, the town of Estepa, with its jurisdiction in Navarre, and the sum of 50,000 doblas within six months. The Queen of Aragon was to be left as hostage for the fulfilment of these conditions, and to reside until they were executed, in the town of Lanaga in Navarre, under the charge of the Archbishop of Toledo. None of the conditions were performed, nor in all probability had any intention of performing them been entertained.*

This tame relinquishment of advantages already secured

* The open profligacy of the Queen, who emulated the vices of her husband, and the support which she received from the Marquis de Villena, had, four years previously, so disgusted the less dissipated of the grandees, that they formed a coalition, and invited the King of Aragon to Castile, imploring him to exert his influence in averting the dishonour of the kingdom; but as he failed to effect any wholesome change in the morals of so corrupt a Court, his expostulations were only productive of a coolness between himself and the licentious Henry; and when (in 1463) Louis XI. of France was induced to meet the Castilian monarch on the banks of the Bidassoa, in order to induce a reconciliation between the two hostile sovereigns, the French King conceived so great a disgust towards Henry, that the conference, for which the most splendid preparations had been made, did not last more than fifteen minutes.—Ed.

was extremely unsatisfactory to the Castilians, who loudly accused the ministers, Don Juan Pacheco and the Archbishop, of having sold the interests of King and country. Even the King at length perceived his error, and dismissing his false counsellors from their office of trust, attempted to retrieve matters by sending to the Catalans a retractation of his refusal to head their revolt, and a promise to come forthwith to their assistance with a large body of troops. But his recantation was tardy; the indignant Catalans had already offered their allegiance to Don Pedro, the Constable of Portugal.

The King, daily more disgusted with the conduct of the Marquis and the Archbishop, whose plots he more than suspected, resolved, without communicating his plans to them, to effect an alliance with Portugal. To this effect an interview was arranged with that King, at which were present the Queen and the Infantes, Isabel and Alfonso, and the hand of the young Infanta was promised to the Portuguese monarch.

Meantime the ex-ministers were not idle. Having formed with the disaffected nobles, of whom there were not a few, a coalition which, from the power and wealth of some of its members, was truly formidable, they assembled at Burgos and declared that the oath of allegiance they had sworn to the Princess Juana was compulsory; and that they recognized no legitimate heir nearer to the throne than the Infante Alfonso, whom they required Enrique to place in their hands to be publicly sworn as his successor. The Marquis of Villena exasperated beyond the limits of all prudence, by the King's bestowal of the Grand Mastership of Santiago on the Count of Ledesma, made no less than three bold attempts to seize his rival and the whole of the royal family, each of which

was rendered abortive by the vigilance of some of Enrique's faithful servants. A little timely energy would doubtless have crushed the conspiracy in the bud; and, had the King seized the Marquis, who was actually in the royal palace when information was brought of two schemes for the abduction of the royal family, and used the severity the culprit had so manifestly incurred, he would have saved himself from a long series of insults.

Provided as he still was with ample means, surrounded by numerous and loyal vassals, and brave and well-equipped troops, the pusillanimity evinced by Enrique is almost incredible. Having assembled his council to consult on the conduct to be observed towards the rebels, all were of opinion that the King should pay no attention to their insolent demands, but employ force to reduce them. The venerable and learned Archbishop of Cuença, who had been the King's preceptor, was especially urgent that strong measures should be adopted. The advice was too much in opposition to the weak, wavering nature of Enrique to be relished by him. "Those who are not called on to peril their own lives are prodigal of the blood of others," said he. "It is easy to see that those who are to fight are not your children, or you would be more chary of endangering them; these matters, father Bishop, are to be treated in another fashion than you would propose and vote for."

To this the churchman replied, with more truth and warmth than breeding, "I plainly perceive, Sire, that you have no mind to reign in peace and freedom; and, since your highness will neither defend your honour, nor revenge an outrage, I shall live to see you the most degraded King that ever reigned in Spain, and to find you repent, but too late, this cowardice."

Enrique was not to be moved by the advice, entreaties, or remonstrances of his wise adherents; and, notwithstanding all they could say, entered into a negotiation with the coalition. In the interview that he had with the leaguers, he even surprised them by the ready servility with which he complied with all their demands. He consented that his young brother Alfonso should be declared heir, that Don Beltran should renounce the Grand Mastership of Santiago in his favour, and that he would within twelve days place the young Alfonso in their hands. The leaguers, on their side, promised Alfonso should marry the Princess Juana.

These were the principal items of this most shameful treaty. The King then returned to Segovia, where the royal family was then residing. His faithful friends earnestly besought him to reconsider the matter, and not to give up his brother to the conspirators, who, they warned him, only wanted to raise him to the throne. But advice and warning were equally useless with the cowardly Enrique, who was resolved, at any cost, to avoid war; and, early in the year 1465, the conditions stipulated on his part were punctually fulfilled. As might have been expected, these concessions served only to increase the insolence of the leaguers, who refused to disband their troops. The town of Valladolid also declared against the King, and the rebels conducted the young Infante to Avila to proclaim him King of Leon and Castile.

In the open plain near the city, a high scaffolding, sustaining a platform, was erected, and on it was placed a throne, on which was seated an effigy of Enrique, dressed in mourning robes, with the crown, sceptre, and other attributes of royalty. A herald then ascended the platform, and in a loud voice read the charges brought against

the King, disabling him from exercising the royal prerogatives.

At the first accusation, declaring Enrique unworthy of royalty, Don Alfonso Carillo, the Archbishop of Toledo, approached the effigy, and tore the crown from its head. At the second, declaring him unfit to administer justice, Don Alvaro de Zuñiga took the sword from its side: at the third, pronouncing his political incapacity, Don Rodrigo Pimentel, Count of Benevente, deprived it of the sceptre; at the fourth, declaring he had forfeited the throne, Don Diego Lopez de Zuñiga hurled the image into the dust, amid shouts of derision and loud insults. The nobles then raising the Infante Don Alfonso on their shoulders, the cry of "*Castile, Castile, for the King, Don Alfonso!*" proclaimed his accession. Having seated him on the throne, each lord, in turn, kissed his hand in token of homage, the Marquis of Villena being the first to seal his treason to his liege lord.

The King received the news of this unparalleled insolence with extraordinary calmness, merely saying, "Truly may I repeat the words of the prophet Isaiah, 'I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.' But though they have destroyed an image, they have no power to destroy the reality embodied in my person, and to Jesus, the Judge of Kings, do I submit my cause, for he knoweth my innocence."

While the weak monarch consoled himself under his disgrace with Biblical sentences, the league was making daily conquests, fortress after fortress submitting to its authority. The large cities of Burgos, Toledo, Cordova, and Seville, declared for the insurgents. The domains of the principal lords of the league being situated in the southern provinces, these favoured the party of Alfonso.

The news of the defection of so large a portion of his subjects, which would have roused some spirits to acts of daring, and crushed others to the very earth, merely elicited from Enrique a quotation from Job, which the miserable sovereign was well justified in applying to himself: "Naked came I from my mother's womb, and naked must I go down to the earth!"

The country meanwhile was in a state of dire confusion from one extremity to the other. While presenting the sight, unprecedented in Castile, of two sovereigns reigning at once with all the attributes of royalty, issuing decrees, convoking Cortes, and exercising all the functions of government, rule, legislation, and law, were by-words of mockery and cloaks for crime. Large bands of robbers openly infested the highways, and levied their contributions on the country people; who, in turn, confederated for the defence of their property, and soon growing insolent as they increased in strength, even attempted to gain immunity from their regular taxation, by waging war with their feudal lords. The latter, however, backed as they were by numerous well-armed and well-disciplined troops of retainers, easily foiled these ill-planned attempts.

Many of the old nobles, alarmed at the convulsed state into which the factions had thrown the nation, which seemed on the eve of perishing in the whirlwind of anarchy, and disgusted with the arbitrary proceedings of the league; pitying, also, the miserable monarch, whose weakness rather than vices had reduced him thus low, began to rally round the legitimate occupant of the throne. The King having issued a proclamation, calling all the loyal subjects to his aid, Don Garci Alvarez, Count of

Alva, was the first to respond to the summons, with three hundred men-at-arms, two hundred horse, and a thousand foot-soldiers. The Queen was dispatched to Portugal, accompanied, by the Infanta Isabel, to solicit aid from her brother, and the King removed to Zamora, where he was joined by the Count of Trastamara, with two hundred foot soldiers, and as many horse, by the Count of Valencia, with one hundred men-at-arms and two hundred horse, and many other nobles, who, hoping to restore order, flocked to the standard of the King.

The "good Count of Haro," the ever-faithful and powerful Mendozas, the Marquis of Santillana, whose immense estates in the north gave him great influence there, through every storm had adhered to the King; and the army that now assembled for the defence of his rights, amounting to no less than eighty thousand infantry and fourteen thousand cavalry, far outnumbering the forces of the insurgents, would have ensured complete triumph to his cause, had not his imbecility and cowardice again ruined it, and dashed the hopes of the true hearts who sought to give peace to their distracted country. The wretched instrument by which they endeavoured to achieve their laudable purpose, frustrated all their well-concerted measures, and wantonly threw away every chance of securing his tottering throne.

Meantime Enrique had dispatched two trusty officers with three hundred horse to bring the little Princess Juana from Segovia, and she accordingly made her entrance in state into Zamora, under the royal canopy, with the customary homage paid to the heir-apparent of the crown. Every succeeding day, while it added strength to the King's party, weakened that of the enemy. The

Marquis of Villena, who had thought by elevating a child to the throne to reign under his name, finding his ambitious plans checked by his confederates, no less eager than himself for power, now endeavoured to counterbalance their influence by intriguing with the royal party, and thus also securing an asylum in case of a defeat. The crafty Marquis was too well acquainted with the easy, apathetic nature of his master, to doubt of his eagerly embracing any means which he might offer of conciliating the difference between them, and the event showed he judged rightly. The debased sovereign stooped to negotiate with the rebel, and accepted the humiliating proposal of uniting his sister Isabel to Don Pedro Giron, Grand Master of Calatrava, and brother of the Marquis; the latter agreeing to come over to the King with three thousand lances, to lend him seventy thousand doblas, and to place his young brother Alfonso in his hands. The King, moreover, was to send from his Court the Duke of Alburquerque and the Bishop of Calahorra.

The King's adherents were justly incensed at this shameless treaty, but the death of the Grand Master soon dissipated the hopes of the rebels. That noble having, despite the open refusal of the Infanta, made the most brilliant preparations for his approaching nuptials, while on his way to claim his bride, followed by a numerous suite, was taken suddenly ill of a disease which carried him off on the fourth day, to the grief of the craven Enrique, who had hoped from this union to obtain repose.

The insurgents still remaining in arms, and no hope of conciliation being now possible between the contending parties, the settlement of the respective claims of each was finally left to the decision of arms. A battle was fought

in 1467, on the plains of Olmedo,* which lasted three hours, and was brought to a conclusion by the approach of night, without any very signal advantage to either side, though the King's forces remained in possession of the field. The King's army had far outnumbered that of the league, but the want of spirit in its head infused irresolution into the men, while the chiefs of the other party made up, by their bravery and well-judged and decisive movements, for their numerical inferiority.

Previous to the battle, an incident occured which is truly characteristic of the reckless valour of the Castilians. The Archbishop of Seville sent to warn Don Beltran de la Cueva not to appear on the field, as forty gentlemen had taken an oath to seek him out and take his life. The favourite, who had recently been created Duke of Alburquerque, returned an answer that shows him not to have been totally undeserving the partiality with which his sovereign regarded him. "Tell your lord," said the gallant noble, "that I take kindly, and as the act of a friend, that his courteous message, but that it would ill beseem a knight to act as he advises, for honour hangs ever on the skirts of danger; and, as to those gentlemen who have sworn my death, to them, also, shall you bear a message." Then drawing the man's attention to the dress he wore; "Look here," continued Don Beltran, "this same dress and colours shall I wear on the day of the battle. I prithee mark and describe them well to those bold knights, that by these signs and tokens, they may know, when they meet him, the Duke of Alburquerque." This knightly defiance had well nigh cost the

* Two-and-twenty years before, these plains had witnessed the battle between Don Juan II. and his rebellious subjects.

bold noble his life; but Enrique himself was not one to follow his fearless example, and kept out of reach of danger, until, receiving false intelligence of his party losing the day, he, with some thirty or forty attendants, spurred till they reached the shelter of a neighbouring village. The Archbishop of Toledo, who had headed the forces of his party, distinguished by the rich scarlet mantle with its embroidered white cross worn over his armour, after proving himself possessed of the talents of an able general, as well as of the brilliant valour of a gallant knight, and rallying again and again his disordered troops, though suffering from a wound in the arm, was the last to retire, accompanied by the young Alfonso, who, though but fourteen years of age, rode by his side, clad in mail, through all the battle. The Counts of Alva and Luna, and several other nobles, were captured.

Both parties were recruiting to renew the contest, when a Legate from the Pope arrived, who endeavoured to prevail on the insurgents to lay down their arms and submit their quarrel to his arbitration. Finding his arguments ineffectual, he had recourse to the weapons which had in other days proved so decisive, and threatened them with the thunders of the Church. But the time when these anathemas could cause dread had gone by; and the bold barons, while they acknowledged the sway of the Pontiff in all spiritual matters, laughed at and denied his claim to the right of interference in the temporal affairs of Castile. The Legate, imprudently attempting to insist, was insulted, hooted, and forced to make a precipitate retreat from the camp of the insurgents. A suspension of arms was, however, agreed upon between the leaguers and the King.

In the meanwhile the Queen, who had remained with the royal family in Segovia, was greatly alarmed by the

news brought to her of that town having been betrayed to the insurgents, by its treacherous Alcalde, Don Pedro Arrias; and she immediately took refuge with her daughter, and the Duchess of Alburquerque, in the fortress, but could not induce the Infanta Isabel to accompany her thither, as the latter, having predetermined to join her brother Alfonso's party, chose with her own ladies to await his arrival in the palace. The Segovians, though little pleased with the entrance of the leaguers, could make no opposition to forces so superior, and submitted quietly; but the King was greatly grieved at the loss of this town, which, from its surrounding forests, abounding with game, was a favourite residence. Segovia was, moreover, the place of his birth; it contained his treasures, and had been embellished and enriched *con amore* by Enrique, who reckoned himself among its citizens.

Destitute of firmness to look the evil steadily in the face, and to rally against the blow, the spiritless monarch disbanded his troops, and tamely placed himself in the hands of the rebels, who offered to make a complete restitution of all they had taken from the King within six months; a promise they never intended to realize. The Queen was placed in the fortress of Alahijos, under the charge of the Archbishop of Seville; and the King, after spending four months in the palace of the Count of Placencia, was conducted from one place to another, amused by the promises of the Marquis of Villena.

In the following year the death of the young Alfonso* seemed to promise the dissolution of his faction, but the leaguers immediately proclaimed his sister Isabel, as heiress

* The Infante Alfonso was found dead in his bed on the 5th of July, 1468. By some his sudden demise was attributed to the pestilence then raging, and by others to poison.

to his right, Queen of Castile and Leon. Enrique, with his customary facility, negotiated with the league and accepted all the proposals made to him.* He not only recognized the Princess as his heiress (she refused to accept the title of Queen during the life of Enrique), but consented that his Queen Juana should be divorced and sent back to Portugal within four months. Enrique also agreed to give to Isabel the towns of Avila, Buete, Molina, Medina del Campo, Olmedo, Escalona, and Ubeda, to sustain her state as Crown Princess; and the Infanta, on her part, promised never to marry without the King's consent. This treaty took place in Toros de Guisanda, on Monday, September 19th, 1468.

Juana received with emotions of mingled indignation and sorrow the news of her husband's weak compliance with the decree that sent her back an exile and a divorced Queen to her native land; and, by illegitimatizing her child, deprived her of her inheritance. Having concerted with Don Luis Hurtado de Mendoza, reputed one of her lovers, her escape from the fortress of Alahijos, where she was kept a close prisoner by the Archbishop of Seville, the Queen was lowered one night from the window of her apartment in a basket. The rope unfortunately proved short, and those above, who thought that she had reached the ground, letting it go suddenly, she was precipitated several

* The Princess Isabella had lived in extreme seclusion, and had thus protected herself against the contagion of her sister-in-law's licentious Court. The proposal which had been made to unite her to Giron, the Grand Master of Calatrava, had filled her with indignation; yet she was too high-minded to resent the affront; and when the crown was proposed to her by the leaguers, resolutely refused to accept it to the prejudice of her brother; but, convinced of the illegitimacy of Doña Juana, consented to receive the title of Princess of Asturias, and to be acknowledged as heiress to the kingdom.—Ed.

feet, and in the fall injured her face and one of her limbs. Without loss of time, and regardless of pain, Juana mounted behind Don Luis and repaired to Buytrago, where her daughter resided. The Archbishop of Seville was so much incensed by the Queen's flight, that he became from that day her most implacable enemy.

Juana no sooner found herself at liberty than she took all the measures in her power for the assertion of her child's rights. Having been advised that Isabel had been sworn heiress to the crown, she dispatched Don Luis Hurtado, invested with full powers, to protest against the injustice done to herself and her daughter; asserting that the latter, being born in wedlock, and in the King's palace, could not be pronounced illegitimate. To this, the enemies of the Queen replied, that if the being born in wedlock and in the King's house constituted a right to the throne, the Queen had two other children, Don Fernando and Don Apostol, by Don Pedro de Castilla, who, as males, had a still better right to the inheritance.

That the Queen's conduct was little in accordance with the grave dignity of Castilian royalty, and that her youth and vivacity led her to commit many imprudent acts which gave ample scope to the misinterpretations of her enemies, there is no doubt; but, it is also very probable that her levity has been greatly exaggerated by the faction which sought to place another sovereign on the throne; and, the chroniclers who wrote during the reigns of Isabel and her immediate successors, were careful to record in the worst colours every circumstance that, by rendering the illegitimacy of Juana doubtful, substantiated the claim of her successful rival. Enrique himself never, of his own free will, expressed a doubt of his paternity. His own

early misconduct had subjected him to an imputation from which his partisans had in latter years vainly sought to clear him, by asserting that time had restored his vigour; but suspicion once excited is difficult to allay. Slander, like some foul substance thrown into a calm lake, may sink for a while and seem to be laid at rest for ever, but let a strong breeze ruffle the face of the waters, and it will rise to the surface impregnated with the slime in which it has been embedded. The imprudent, if unfortunate, are seldom allowed to be guiltless. If, as many circumstances would tend to show, Juana, with the connivance of her weak husband, had one lover, it is more than probable that the voice of rumour multiplied the one to ten.

It was concerted between the Marquis of Villena and the King, that the Princess Juana should marry the Crown Prince of Portugal, and the Infanta Isabel the King, his father; and that if the latter should have no issue, the former should inherit the crown of Castile. Isabel, however, though present when this arrangement was made, never gave her consent to marry one whose years so greatly outnumbered her own.

Queen Juana was invited to be present at the interview proposed with the King of Portugal, but fearing lest it might prove a scheme to leave her in the power of her brother and prevent her returning to Castile, she positively refused to attend.

Many nobles resenting that Isabel should have been sworn heiress without their participation, others indignant at the King having received in his favour the arch rebel Villena, and others again convinced of the legitimacy of Juana, upheld the claim of that Princess. Among these were the powerful house of Mendoza and the great Marquis of Santillana. The King himself

secretly favoured this party; and neither in public nor in private was ever heard to express a doubt of the Princess, to whom he manifested great affection, being his own child. He moreover wrote with his own hand to the Pope, Paul II., requesting that he would not confirm the Infanta Isabel's election, and also to the King of Portugal, and to his own agent at Rome, that they might urge the matter with the Pontiff.

The refusal of Isabel to marry either the King of Portugal or the Duke of Guienne, who was subsequently proposed, irritating the King greatly, as the union would, in either case, have been very advantageous to the interests of the Princess Juana; the age of the Portuguese monarch rendering it highly improbable that any issue would be born of the marriage, and the Frenchman being at so great a distance as to render that marriage a species of exile for the bride. The preference of Isabel for the Prince of Aragon was soon confirmed, to the great anger of the King, by her secret marriage with him against the express will of Enrique, who manifested his resentment by openly retracting his acknowledgment of Isabel as heiress, and negotiating the marriage of the Princess Juana with the Duke of Guienne. The betrothal took place in Valde Lozoya, between Segovia and Buytrago, in October of the year 1470. The Queen having brought her daughter accompanied by the Marquis of Santillana and a number of nobles, the King gave his reasons for revoking his promise to Isabel, dwelling chiefly on her disobedience to his commands. The Cardinal, Ambassador of France, then approaching the Queen, received her solemn oath that the Princess Juana, her daughter, was the legitimate child of King Enrique, who, in his turn, swore that he had no reason to doubt that the said

Princess was his child, and that he had ever held her as such. This extraordinary ceremony was followed by that of the betrothal, the Count of Boulogne acting as proxy for the Duke. The nobles and prelates then took the oath of allegiance to Juana. Three days afterwards the King and Queen repaired, with but few followers, to Segovia, the Princess making her entrance into that town with great solemnity, accompanied by a numerous suite of lords and prelates.

This alliance was, however, soon dissolved by the sudden death of the Duke, caused, as it was supposed, by poison. Enrique then endeavoured to conclude the marriage between Juana and the heir of Portugal which had formerly been treated of; but his efforts met with no success, the King of Portugal being too prudent to wish to connect his son with one whose pretensions were matter of so much dispute, and whose alliance would involve him in the civil war then pending. The King still anxious to establish the Princess suitably, then sent for his cousin Enrique, son of the Infante Don Enrique, and nephew of his mother, Doña Maria, Queen of Aragon.

The King, in the meanwhile, was constantly urged by by his Mayordomo, Don Andres Cabrera, to be reconciled to his sister. The wife of Cabrera, Doña Beatrix de Bobadilla, having been brought up with Isabel, was united to her by the closest ties of friendship, and neglected no opportunity of advancing her mistress's interests. Enrique's pliant temper was not proof against these repeated solicitations, and he finally consented to an interview, which took place in Segovia, December, 1473. Enrique received his sister with tokens of affection; and, after a conversation which lasted two hours, during which Isabel endeavoured to vindicate her con-

duct, and to obtain his sanction to her marriage with Ferdinand of Aragon, to prove publicly the good terms on which they stood, led her palfrey by the rein through the streets of Segovia. Isabel, judging the occasion propitious, sent for her husband; and Enrique, with his usual facility, having been persuaded to receive and welcome him kindly, the reconciliation of these three members of the royal family gave rise to a series of fêtes and rejoicings. At the first of these entertainments, the King partook of a banquet with his sister and brother-in-law, and was immediately afterwards taken severely ill. He recovered but partially from this indisposition, the effects of which continued to afflict him to the day of his death. While the King lay ill, the partisans of Isabel wearied him with continual importunities, to induce him to acknowledge her as his successor, but Enrique eluded every attempt of the kind; and, finally, irritated by the perseverance with which the unwelcome subject was forced upon him, concerted measures with the Grand Master of Santiago* for the seizure of the person of his daughter's rival. The scheme, having been discovered prematurely, was foiled by Isabel and her adherents.

The King, worn out by the disease contracted at the time of his reconciliation with Isabel, survived it but one year, during which he was taken from place to place, a mere tool of the whims and selfish ambition of the Grand Master. This intriguing, restless spirit preceded by a few months his master to the tomb; but Enrique, by a strange infatuation, not only lamented with many tears the event that terminated his slavery, but continued all the father's

* Don Juan Pacheco, having been created Grand Master of Santiago, had renounced the Marquisate of Villena to his son.

honours to his son, the Marquis of Villena, in whose behalf he underwent so much fatigue of mind and body as contributed greatly to aggravate his disease, and to hurry him to his grave.

On the 11th of December, 1474, expired the last male scion of the line of Trastamara, a line which for one hundred years had occupied the throne of Castile. Whether or not Enrique left a will has been matter of great doubt and dispute, and never to this day clearly ascertained; but that he declared, on his death-bed, the Princess Juana, to be his lawful daughter and heiress, is too well authenticated to admit of doubt.

During the last four years of Enrique's existence, his Queen had almost constantly lived apart from him. A dislike on the part of the King, caused by Juana's dissolute conduct, is assigned as the reason of this estrangement. If we take into consideration that the King, during that period, was entirely under the control of those who were the bitterest enemies of Juana, and that his actions never emanated from any will of his own, but were dictated by the interests of those who held him in subjection, we may be inclined to doubt whether the Queen was as criminal as she is represented to have been.

Juana survived her husband only six months, and died on the 13th of June, 1475, in Madrid, at the early age of thirty-six.

To the historian who writes the reign of Enrique IV., devolves the unwelcome task of recording the most disastrous and corrupt period of the history of Spain. The last five years of this unhappy reign, were especially marked by the frightful anarchy into which the State was thrown. The work of destruction and ruin effected by

the selfish ambition and crushing despotism of the rulers, aided by the turbulent current of demoralization which, taking its source in the higher classes, and pervading all ranks, threatened to sweep away all that remained of wisdom, greatness and goodness in Castile, presents a fearful picture.

The student of history will have frequent occasion to notice that corrupted civilization is ever the forerunner of national decay; and in this instance, the cancer, whose roots were in the venal system of government, had spread its infection far and wide, threatening complete annihilation. The loyalty innate in the majority of the Castilians; the repeated efforts of many powerful, brave, upright, and conscientious nobles to rouse the King from his lethargy, and to rescue the State from the abyss into which the factions were precipitating it; his own shame and degradation; all these motives were neutralized by the apathetic nature of Enrique, who, a votary of pleasure, sacrificed his honour and the nation to his love of indolent and luxuriant ease. In the number of sovereigns who had preceded him on the throne, not one can be found so utterly destitute of every qualification of a King. Neither did his ill-chosen ministers possess the talent and patriotism that might have atoned for the imbecility of the monarch himself.

Intent on his own personal aggrandizement, the favourite, grasping, insatiate and tyrannical, caused his wearied tool to exclaim: "Oh, that the world were mine for a few days, perchance I might then satisfy the inordinate cupidity of Villena!" The long-continued struggle of the rival factions had given a death-blow to commerce, and produced a complete paralysis of industry in all its branches. The agriculturist, seeing his fields repeatedly ravaged,

and hopeless of reaping his harvests, ceased to cultivate the ground; and for two years a fearful scarcity added to the horrors of civil war. The high roads had become impassable, save to numerous and well-armed bodies of men, from the numerous bands of robbers that infested them, composed of the idle, the licentious, and the disaffected. These were not unfrequently the retainers of men of rank and fortune, whose castles were converted into the strongholds of freebooters, dens of idleness, and schools of civil war. No hostile invaders could have committed worse depredations than these robber chieftains, the incentive of private feud being often added to that of cupidity. Society, shaken to its very foundations, had ceased to be aught save a system of strife and contest, the strong tyrannizing over the weak, through all its grades. Wholesale pillage, incendiarism, and massacres threatened to make a wide and desolate waste of this beautiful land, when the death of Enrique ended the fearful crisis. With the reign of Isabel and Ferdinand commenced a new and splendid era. The chaos slowly dispelled; and the sun of Castilian glory, on the eve of being quenched for ever, rose through the mist with a brilliancy far surpassing the light of the fairest of its former days. Everything had to be reorganized, remoulded, reconstructed, created anew; but, though dispersed, trodden under foot, and perverted to evil, the elements were there, and it required but a prudent and skilful hand to disentangle the threads from the maze.

The incidents ocurring in this reign, connected with the life of Isabel, are given more at large in the annals of that Queen.

END OF VOL. I.

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